BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C. IN JEWISH HISTORY AND RELIGION

by

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OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION: The Historical Development in Judaism from 586-500 B. C.

The literature which arrests our attention is found almost wholly within the bounds of the Hebrew Old Testament. The Priestly Code to which the entire first chapter and a large part of the first book of the Old Testament belong, and also the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, were both written in this period.

Old Testament literature is connected most directly to Old Testament life and so we shall leave the problems of authorship and works and pass pleasantly along the simple trails of the land of Palestine and the surrounding countryside,meeting a few people, witnessing a few events —— living again, in our imagination, those days which bear unmistakable signs of a great, moving, divine force upon the lives and actions of an otherwise unfortunate people.

The story of the Hebrews from the time of Moses until the period under consideration resembles much the economic cycle of the world. These people, like the sea, knew many waves and troughs; they witnessed the ebb and flow of the tide of national and religious life. At times we see the clouds part and through them glimpse a vision

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of great mountain peaks of experience, of power, and accomplishment. Then the clouds close, and the scene becomes dark and depressing. It is a wonder, to me, as I read their story, that the race continued as long and has given the world the heritage that it did.

In the running history of the Hebrews, we come to the period of the rule of the Chaldeans. Many of the aristocracy of Jerusalem, including the priests, were sent off into Babylon; the temple was destroyed, and the walls were demolished.

After the murder of Gedaliah, one may well imagine that the Chaldeans sent a band of soldiers to gain revenge. Without a doubt, in the face of this new danger, many of the remaining Hebrews left Judah for Egypt where we find a temple to Jehovah (Yahweh) at Elephantine. Among this group we place Jeremiah and forthwith lose sight of the great prophet.

A. The Second Captivity (586 B. C.) and the Destruction of Jerusalem through the Exile to 500 B. C.

1. Sources from which the facts are taken.

a. Sections of the Old Testament which give the history.

In the second book of Kings[1] we find that

1 -- Kings II, 25:22, also Jeremiah 40:5.

Gedaliah was made governor of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar when he left in 586 B. C.

Beginning with the 39th chapter of Jeremiah, we find more references to our period. The first reference[1] tells of Nebuchadnezzar's orders to release Jeremiah under the Guidance of Gedaliah, the governor. This is valuable information inasmuch as we can use this information as a basis for history, from this point forward. In the same chapter[2], the author tells us that those who were not taken into the exile were the poor. These apparently were given enough land to make their living upon. We learn more of the situation above in the first sixteen verses of Jeremich, and the parallel account of II Kings, 25:23 ff. Gedaliah's assassination and the migration to Egypt is told in Jeremiah 41:1 - 43:7, and parts of that story are told in II Kings 25:25, 26.

II Kings 25:27-30 and Jeremiah 52:31-34 tell of the release of Jehoiachin which must have taken place somewhere near the middle of the sixth century B. C. Leslie[3] dates this event in 561 B. C. while Creelman[4] dates it in 560 or 559 B. C. At any rate, scholars agree that Amilmarduk was the King who freed Jehoiachin,

1 -- Jeremiah 39:11-14.
2 -- Jeremiah 39:10.
3 -- Abingdon Bible Commentary, Leslie, E. A., Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 111.
4 -- Creelman, H., Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 193.

and we know his rule lasted two years at the most.

From the scant historical information of the period immediately preceding, we must draw a good share of our background. There remains only one further assistance. To this period we assign certain writings which we will now examine. The writer of this paper has no intention of considering the intricate details of these fragments. His only interest, at this point, is to reconstruct the background out of which the 5th century came.

b. Literature created during the period which will aid in our historical view.

1.) Creelman[1] gives us much help here in listing the work of Ezekiel in three parts.

a.) The first messages come to us from Babylonia during 586 and the years immediately following. In chapter 25 the destruction of Ammon and the neighboring nations is predicted; from 26:1 to 28:19 the downfall of Tyre is foretold; 28:20-23 tells of Sidon's coming punishment; 28:24-26 glimpses Israel's coming restoration; and 32 prophesies Egypt's downfall.

1 -- Ibid, p. 190.

In the 33rd chapter, Ezekiel tells of his own task; in 34, he gives us a bit of biography of Israel's past rulers; the next two foretell the restoration of Israel; 37 symbolizes the unification of Israel; the next section[1] glimpses the coming judgment of God upon the heathen; and in 39:25-29, he retells his promise from God that Israel is still in His favor and will be restored.

b.) The second messages describe the restored Israel. From 40-43, Ezekiel tells the dimensions of the Temple and describes it for us; in 44-46, he lists the task and the offices of the Temple; and 47-48, he tells of the Temple and the Lord.

c.) The third section is the short message on Egypt[2].

2.) Creelman[3] also suggests that Jeremiah 43:8 to 44:30 was written in Egypt about 581 B. C. in which the prophet foretells Babylonia's conquest of Egypt, and also condemns the Jewish practice of idolatry while in Egypt.

3.) Creelman[4] dates the Holiness Code[5], the book of

1 -- Ezekiel 38:1 - 39:24.
2 -- Ezekiel 29:17-21.
3 -- Ibid, p. 191.
4 -- P. 193.
5 -- Leviticus 17-26, 560-550 B.C., cf. Leslie, Ibid, p. 111, 550 B.C.

In the 32nd chapter, Ezekiel tells of his own task; in 34, he gives us a bit of biography of Israel's past rulers; the next two foretell the restoration of Israel; 37 symbolizes the unification of Israel; the next section, although the coming judgment of God upon the heathen, are in 38:22-23, he retells his dreams from God that Israel is still in His favor and will be restored.

b.) The second passage describes the restored Israel. From 40-42, Ezekiel tells the dimensions of the Temple and describes it for us; in 44-46, he lists the task and the offices of the Temple; and 47-48, he tells of the Temple and the Lord.

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Lamentations[1], Baruch's biography of Jeremiah[2], the Song of Moses[3], and the activity of the Deuteronomic compilers from this period.

4.) Kirkpatrick[4], places Psalms 74 and 79 here; Creelman[5] places Psalm 89 here; and Leslie[6] adds Deutero-Isaiah.

5.) From 570-538 B. C. we can add to our list Isaiah 21, Isaiah 13:1 to 14:23; we can add to this list many valuable bits of literature too numberous to mention.

6.) The following are the lists of the psalms from 570-538 B.C.:

McCurdy: 22, 51, 69, 71, 84, 102.

Kirkpatrick: 68, 22, 94, 102, 74, 79, 89, 71, 77, 80, 139.

Briggs: 42-43, 63, 74, 77:1-15, 79, 81:5c-14, 82, 84, 88, 89, 90, 137, 142.

Creelman: 74, 79, 89, and possibly others.

2. The facts —— Divisions of the Peoples.

This hurried view of historical and literary fragments from which and with which we reconstruct the period just before the dawn of the 5th century gives us a picture of the play just before the curtains are dropped for the

1 -- Creelman 580-550 B.C. cf. Leslie 586-570 B.C. for portions.
2 -- Jeremiah 26, 27-29, 34-44 in the main.
3 -- Deuteronomy 32:1-43.
4 -- Creelman, p. 193.
5 -- P. 194.
6 -- P. 111.

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4.) Kirkpatrick, places Psalms 74 and 79 here; Creelman places Psalm 89 here; and Leslie adds Deutero-Isaiah.

5.) From 520-516 B. C. we can add to our list Isaiah 21, Isaiah 12:1 to 14:23; we can add to this list many valuable bits of literature too numerous to mention.

6.) The following are the texts of the Psalms from 520-516 B.C.:
McCurdy: 22, 51, 89, 71, 84, 102.
Kirkpatrick: 89, 92, 94, 102, 74, 79, 80, 71, 77, 85, 132.
Peters: 42-43, 85, 74, 77:1-15, 79, 91:5a-1a, 82, 94, 89, 89, 90, 127, 142.
Creelman: 74, 79, 89, and possibly others.

2. The Texts — Translations of the Prophets.

This hurried view of historical and literary fragments from which and with which we reconstruct the period just before the Jews of the 6th century give us a picture of the play just before the curtains are dropped for the

I -- Chronicles 1-9 [illegible]
-- Ezra [illegible]
-- Nehemiah [illegible]
-- Esther [illegible]
-- Job [illegible]
-- Ruth [illegible]

silent years. In this glimpse we see the Hebrews in three major groups. There is one little family in Babylon, another in Egypt, and some more of them still at home. Let us look more carefully into each settlement; for there can be little doubt of the fact that each group absorbed much of the foreign element into their existence and carried it back again to their homeland in the 6th and 5th centuries.

a. The Jews among the Chaldeans.

One might well suggest that those Jews who were exiled into Babylon were the fortunate group after all. It is a matter of common evidence that Babylon had become, under the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, the most beautiful and the most powerful city of the East. Its temples to the gods, Marduk and Bel, wide streets and "mountain-high" fortifications, palaces, gardens, and all the rest made a visit to its site an opportunity to be coveted. Isaiah 13:19 describes it as "the glory of the kingdoms", and Jeremiah 51:7 says: "Babylon hath been a golden cup in Jehovah's hand, that made all the earth drunken."

Needless to say, the Hebrews, fresh from their little, sheltered capital up there in the vine-clad hills of Judea where waters rushed madly to the sea, must have been mildly startled by all they saw. Further, it must

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a. The Jews among the Gentiles.

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Needless to say, the Hebrews, from their little, absistated capital up there in the vine-clad hills of Judea where waters rushed madly to the sea, must have been mildly startled by all they saw. Further, it must

have been a homesick handful of folk who journeyed from the quiet of the Palestinian hills to the rush and bustle of the huge Empire. We must remember that, of the three groups here to be discussed, these folk in Babylon were the only ones who moved under compulsion. Theirs was not a movement of choice like that of the pilgrims to Egypt. Besides that, this group of exiles did not all find the same destination. Some "were sold as slaves, some were lost to sight in the mazes of the huge city; others were scattered here and there over immense plains watered by endless canals, on the willow-clad banks of which[1] they wept for Zion[2]".

We know little about the condition of these Jews while they were in Babylon. If the book of Daniel, written about 167 B. C.[3] is a biography of a character among the exiles, we can gain a bit of information of the heights that some of the Jews achieved during the Babylonian and Persian periods. Likewise, from the sources which we listed above, some small details are related. However, in the former case we have come to believe, on good grounds, that the narrator of the life of Daniel was more interested in religious implications than

1 -- Ottley, R.L., A Short History of the Hebrews, p. 218.
2 -- Psalms 137;1.
3 -- Leslie, p. 113.

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1 — Tobit, 1:20.
2 — Ps. 137:1.
3 — Isa. 40:1.

in strict historical data. Thus in most cases the references only permit us to draw inferences which may or may not be true. In like manner we can observe the later Jewish life and form a few more conclusions in regard to the customs and habits that these exiles took back home with them.

Of course, the condition of Daniel and his immediate friends was unusual. The mass of the people did not enjoy such esteem in the minds of the court class. "On the whole, their condition was outwardly peaceful and fairly prosperous.....They acquired lands and houses; their sons and daughters married; they lived in separate communities and were apparently allowed to maintain to some extent the social customs and organizations of their native land".[1]

These people suffered more mentally, probably, than physically. They were troubled over their religion. Here they were, exiled from their homes after an honest attempt at reform under Josiah. Here they were, in a strange land, in the midst of heathen peoples who worshipped other gods and were successful. Jehovah not only had let them be exiled, but they were far away from Him and saw no immediate chance to return. Moreover,

1 -- Ottley, p. 221.

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1 -- Fuller, p. 721.

the faithful few were beset by problems within their own nationality. Many of the exiles had accepted Babylonian gods and business methods and taunted their fellows for holding to the ancient faith. All in all the devout exiles were beset by many and devious trials and tribulations.

In this environment and under these handicaps, Ezekiel labored. We will consider his work in detail shortly. Just now we want to see only his pastoral work. In the latter part of his book he is sketching an ideal community hallowed by the presence of God's sanctuary. At first this did not satisfy because the Temple was many miles away. Gradually, a new custom prevailed. The exiles met on the banks of the canals where services were held. Out of this experience came the Synagogue, a blessing to future generations. Furthermore, we find a good deal of literary activity among the exiles, the details of which we shall soon see. Suffice it to say, since this is merely an introduction, that the Babylonian Jews gained much in their captivity.

b. The Jews among the Egyptians.

To get a true picture of this group we should remember that they left from fear. In the 9th year of

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B. The Jews in the Exile.

To get a true picture of life from we should remember that they left from far. In the 8th year of

his reign, Zedekiah broke his treaty with the Babylonians and revolted. He expected aid from the King of Egypt, but this was not forthcoming, and he went down to ignominious defeat before Nebuchadnezzar[1]. It was after this revolt that Jerusalem was destroyed, and the second captivity took place. Ottley[2] describes those who were left in Jerusalem as "the miserable remnant". Over them Gedaliah was made governor. Within two months he was murdered by Ishmael, a member of the royal family. The citizens were terrified. They feared another wholesale massacre at the hands of the King of Babylon. So they fled into Egypt. Apparently, Jeremiah disapproved of this move, but they went; Jeremiah with them. Many of them settled at Tahpanhes from which point we see the last of the great prophet. It is even supposed that he met a martyr's death among his own people. Beyond this brief statement we know little except as we glance into the Elephantine Papyri, and speak of the Temple.

Besides the group at Tahpankes there are records giving us the story of a Jewish colony at Syene where they had a temple to Yahu as early as 525 B. C.[3]

1 -- for further details see Driver, Authority & Archeology, p. 117.
2 -- p. 216.
3 -- Snyden, Ed. H., Israel's Debt to Egypt.

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1 -- for further details see Tiele, Babylonian & Assyrian
2 -- Ottley, op. cit., p. 175.
3 -- Ottley, op. cit., p. 176.

c. The Jews in Palestine.

We will turn next to those who remained in Judah. It would appear that these people did little to improve their status; for they made little or no effort either to rebuild the walls or the temple. That does not mean, however, that there was no worship, for, to the Jews, the sacred and the secular life was practically one and the same. The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics[1] suggests that there probably was an agreement with Samaria in which the use of the temple at Bethel was open for the Hebrews in Judah. The Aaronite priests here were those who held the same views of the prophetic school which drew up the J. document. This combination is further suggested for we find the J. and E. documents combined in the Pentateuch. Further than that, the writer of Ezra 4 must have held the same belief. We can further suggest this possibility from the arguments of logic. Surely, the mere fact any centralization and union of this almost nationally extinct people would be enough to urge that practice. There are disadvantages in such an idea, though, for any one sanctuary would be a great distance from the homes of some of the Jews, wherever they might live. Opposition probably increased

1 -- Hastings, James, Encyclopedia of Rel. & Ethics, p 450.

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1 -- Bewicke, James, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 490.

as reports and rumors filtered through from the exiles telling of their newly formed local synagogues. Then again, a new prophetic element was coming in under Jeremiah which called for a cessation of animal sacrifice and a complete halt in the sacrifice of the first-born child. It was this group, too, who received the legal code in the book of Deuteronomy. It must have been a hard task to teach this new code of ethics and law, especially the new decalogue, to a people so steeped in Mosaism as these. Yet it apparently did succeed for we find that Shechem[1] accepted the code and made possible a united Israel. This was probably completed before the appointment of Zerubbabel as governor, and the return of some of the exiles.

B. Prophetic Activity During the Period.

1. Jeremiah.

We have already made mention of this prophet who survived the two trips into exile only to finally choose voluntary exile into Egypt. Here is the story of another misunderstood prophet whose visions came true. He, like, Ezekiel, was of priestly descent. His first public appearance came in the 13th year of the reign of

1 -- Deuteronomy 27.

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B. Prophetic Activity During This Period.

1. Jeremiah.

We have already made mention of this prophet who survived the two trips into exile only to finally choose voluntary exile into Egypt. Here is the story of another disappointed prophet whose visions came true. He, like, Ezekiel, was of priestly descent. His first public appearance came in the 13th year of the reign of Josiah -- perhaps 70.

Josiah[1] and just prior to the finding of the Book of Law. He lived in those troublesome times of exile, promise, revolt, and destruction. He spoke of the nation's sin and the coming judgment from God through the aid of an earthly foe. At first he calls for repentance and thence gives advice to safety, for the doom was coming. It must have hurt the great man to make that change. He was deeply emotional and visionary at the same time. More than that, he was continually tried by persecutions and the like even when doing the Lord's commands. Yet he does not hesitate to do his duty until "by his conception of the 'new covenant'[2], he surpasses in spirituality and profundity of insight every other prophet of the Old Testament."[3]

3. Ezekiel.

This introduction would hardly be complete without some cognizance being taken of the warrior for right and truth who had been taken to Babylon at the time of the first exile. Unlike Deutero-Isaiah, we know much of the life of this prophet. He was the son of Buzi and a priest of the aristocracy of Jerusalem. He lived in

1 -- Jeremiah 1:2; 25:3.
2 -- Jeremiah 31:31-34.
3 -- Driver, S.R., Literature of the O. T., p. 275.

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B. Conclusion.

This introduction would barely be complete without some consideration being taken of the warrior for right and truth who had been taken in subjion at the time of the first exile. Unlike Jeremiah-Isaiah, we know much of the life of this prophet. He was the son of Buzi and a priest of the sanctuary of Jerusalem. He lived in

1 -- Jeremiah 1:1-3:3.
2 -- Jeremiah 6, 7:1-24.
3 -- Weiser, S.E.C., Introduction of the O.T., p. 272.

his own house[1] on the banks of the river, Chebar[2]. Here was a man who could move the crowds. He could see what was going to happen, and, though at times his pictures are vague to us, his own enthusiasm forces the vision upon us.

Israel's chief sin is idolatry which she practiced in Egypt and in the wilderness and in the Promised Land and, even now in the exile. Jehovah won't stand for that. Ezekiel's work is divided into three parts[3]: (1) the approaching fall of Jerusalem, to which he gives the first twenty-four chapters, (2) the prophecies concerning foreign nations, to which he gives the next eight chapters, and (3) the future restoration of Israel.

3. Deutero-Isaiah --- 540 B. C.[4]

Hidden within the present book of Isaiah[5] lies the work of some great unnamed prophet. Since this is still a part of our introduction, we shall not attempt to prove the thesis here in any detail. Most authorities agree on the passages that we shall assign to the exiled prophet whom we do not know by name. The most logical

1 -- Ezekiel 3:24; 8:1; 12:3f.
2 -- Ezekiel 3:15.
3 -- Driver, S.R., Literature of the O.T., p. 279.
4 -- Leslie, McFadyen, Approach to the O.T., p. 230.
5 -- Isaiah 40 to 55.

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1 -- Twelfth 7:7a; 9:1; 12;2c
2 -- Twelfth 5:1c
3 -- Thirty. 8.3. Interpretation of the O.T. p. 270
4 -- Isaiah. Volkerkes, Commen. to the O.T. p. 290.
5 -- Isaiah. Cheyne.

reason for their decision lies in the general fact that most folk write about the day in which they live -- especially the prophets. If that is true, we can well assign this prophecy to the period just described in the history of the exile. As a bit of evidence, we find that Jerusalem and the cities of Judah are destroyed; the Temple is demolished;[1] the people are in Babylon[2] which is a doomed empire because she is both too conceited and too heartless to long exist as a world power[3]. Beyond that we find that Cyrus is twice mentioned by name[4], and the author prophesies that he will be the ruler to free Israel, permitting the exiles to return home[5] and rebuild their sacred city[6].

The first prophecy is found in Chapters 40 to 48 and assures the exiles that they will soon be free. Isaiah II is sure that Cyrus is Jehovah's assistant in this task. From this point, the prophet idealizes the mission of Israel, in naming the Israelites to teach the world true religion[7]. The remainder deals with Jehovah

1-- Isaiah 44:26 ff.
2 -- Isaiah 48:20.
3 -- Isaiah 46:6.
4 -- Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1.
5 -- Isaiah 45:13.
6 -- Isaiah 44:28.
7 -- Isaiah 42:6.

and his relation to idols which is further developed in chapter 48 and following. His main interest in this sections seems to be that the people shall get themselves ready morally to hear Jehovah's call. He introduces again the ideal servant and describes him vividly in chapters 49 and 50:4-9, etc. In the last part of this prophecy, we find the most advanced thinking to date. We see the servant of Jehovah suffering for other's sins as well as his own. He concludes with another call to repentance and acceptance of the better way[1]. In this prophet we seek and find a good deal of the inspiration which could not help but make an impression upon the exiles of the 6th century and thus upon the reunited people of the 5th[2].

4. Haggai.

This prophet comes into our picture about sixteen or eighteen years after the return of Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar)[3]. In these years no effort has been made,

1 -- Driver, S.R., Introduction to the Literature of the O. T., p. 230ff, & Driver, S.R., Isaiah: His Life and Times, Part II chapters 3 to 5 are fine for discussion of Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah as one section. Consideration of this stand will be given later.
2 -- Levy, Reuben, Deutero-Isaiah, p. 26.
3 -- Bennett, W.H., The Rel. of the Post-Exilic Prophets
Kent, C.F., History of Jewish People, p.141ff.// Ch. 6.
Driver, S.R., L. O. T., p. 343ff.
Smith, H.P., O. T. History, p. 349ff.
Ottley, R.L., Short History of the Hebrews, p. 231ff.

or, at least, no effort has been successful, in rebuilding the temple. This inaction, apparently, was the cause of much Divine displeasure; for crops were poor, and the people suffered generally. Then came the feast of the new moon, and with it the appeal of Haggai to postpone no longer the building of the temple. His is not the silver tongue of an orator, but he seems to have had the facts and the enthusiasm to gain action. He touched their hearts, and they began to build within a month[1]. His second message was as practical as the first. Some of the older folk remembered the days of the Old Temple and were disappointed with the new one. The prophet assures them that this new temple will have Gentile gifts to beautify it and will surpass the Solomonian Temple in the blessing of peace bestowed upon it[2]. His third message to the people must have come at a slack time in the building, for he assures them that as long as the Temple remains uncompleted the people remain unclean. Simultaneous with this advice to the people, is the assurance to Zerubbabel that he will gain much for this contribution to Jehovah. This prophet is simple and goes right to the point. The 5th century owes much to this man, who, with

1 -- Kent, p. 141 and Driver, p. 343.
2 -- Driver, p. 343.

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the temple. This innovation, apparently, was the cause of
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[illegible]

his colleague, Zechariah, laid the practical foundations out of the disappointment of the 6th.

5. Zechariah 1-8.

Here is the last of the great personages we shall consider in our introduction. He was a contemporary of Haggai, at least, so far as we are able to tell. There are here and there rumors of additions and fittings which would change the general historical and chronological date —— some even suggesting that the prophecy dated before the exile[1]. Most authorities, however, hold to the traditional view that this prophet came on to the scene during the work of Haggai. He assures the people that, though former prophets, leaders, and hopes have passed away, Yahweh still exists, and His word is abiding. Going farther he broadens the visions of his listeners by describing the bounds of the New Jerusalem.

C. The Close of the 6th Century and Its Heritage to the 5th.

Here we have seen roughly the work of the five greatest leaders just prior to our century. Jeremiah had held the fort in Jerusalem and had probably died a martyr's death with the Exiles in Egypt, not failing, to leave with them much of good, as we shall see. Ezekiel

1 -- Driver, p. 348.

and Second Isaiah had maintained the faith and the hope of the Jews in Babylon. And finally, Haggai and Zechariah preserved the zeal that was well on the way to extinction — fanning the spark into the fire of action until the altar was built, the foundation was laid, and the temple was dedicated.

If this century left no other heritage to the succeeding ones, it did leave a reorganized religion in the years that followed the return.

II. The History of the Fifth Century B. C.

A. External History of the Period.

1. Persia.

As the fifth century opens, Darius I is on the throne of Persia. He ascended the throne in 521 in a series of moves so typical of ancient government. Gaumata had tricked Cambyses and gained the powerful throne in the year before. Like many such characters, he did not last long. His treachery was discovered, and Darius, who apparently had been with Cambyses in Egypt, put him to death. At once he claimed the throne by tracing his ancestry to Archaemenes and the royal line. That was good, but not enough. He had come to rule "in a dangerous hour"[1], and had to fight to hold his power. His rule is marked with much of the barbarism which was absent from the reign of Cyrus. He won his battles and mutilated the men who rose in revolt against him. In rapid succession he won over Gaumata, Atrina, Nidintu-Bel, Fravartich (phraortes), Martiya, Citrantakhma, Vabyazdata, Arakha, Froda, and Skunkha. We have the records of these events for Darius had his story carved on a mountain side,

1 -- Rogers, R.W., A History of Ancient Persia, p. 89.

on the main trade route, sixty-five miles from Hamadan[1].

His next move was a conquest of Egypt. With all this empire, he must have a method of government. Cyrus' system of viceroys had failed because of the power each ruler had. Thus, Darius inaugurated the satrap system. Here the King was the head with absolute power. Under him were some score of more satraps ruling the smaller provinces of the empire. Of these satrapies, Herodotus[2] lists an unnamed one fifth which included Palestine, Phoenicia, and the island of Cyprus. The duties of the satrap were primarily that of collecting the taxes[3], but this was not all, for he was also the general manager of the province. He was the supreme judge of his group and could negotiate with other leaders. Here was too much power without control so the great King either sent out his royal family of married his daughters to some suitable man.

As our century opens, Darius is planning a conquest of Greece. The land battle was successful, if not a great event, but the water conquest failed utterly. In 491, Persian heralds began to get the Ionian's small neighbors, who had been their friends, to turn Persian

1 -- Ibid, p. 96.
2 -- III, 31.
3 -- 350 talents from number 5.

in their support. This done, they met the Greeks at Marathon, the result of which is known in all history. Still, Darius would not give up, and, in 487, he was ready to attack again, planning to put down a revolt in Egypt on the way. This excursion was never made, for Darius died in 485, the "greatest Oriental ruler from then until now".[1]

Artobozanes was Darius' eldest son, but Xerxes was the first son born after Darius ascended the throne. Thus to him fell the lot of King in 485. His name in Hebrew is Ahasuerus[2]. He was thirty-five years of age and admired by his people. He had problems at once in the revolt of Egypt and the Grecian campaign left unfinished by his father. The first he began in 486. He then put down a revolt in Babylon, and began his plans for Greece. In 480, the troops began to move. They won several battles but were turned back at Salamis which was the beginning of ultimate defeat. By 478, there were no more Persians in Greece. In 464, he was murdered by Artabanus. His career had been moderately successful. He had kept the empire together even if he had not been

1 -- Rogers, p. 139.
2 -- See Ezra 4:6 and Esther --- note: We may use this fact to date the book of Esther later.
3 -- Rogers, p. 145.

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able to win more land. In his later years the power and the wealth of the Empire was too much for him.

We do not know what became of the murderer, Artabanus. Rogers[1] suggests that some scholars place him on the throne for some seven months, but, if this is so, it must have been as a masquerade, for he had no right to the throne as Xerxes had at least three sons.

The eldest two of these were born while their father was not yet King so Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) became legal ruler. His surname, Longimanus, or long hand, was given him because his right hand was longer than his left[2]. If he had been a peaceful governor, the Persian Empire might have recovered from her exhaustion within the court itself caused by Xerxes' many intrigues to build him a harem. But Artaxerxes was not that man. Then he had to put down uprisings in his provinces. The first was from his brother, Hystaspes, who was put down after two bloody battles in 462 B. C. The second came from Egypt, in the treachery of Inaros, son of Psammetichus[3]. At the first conflict Persia won, but before the traitor was completely routed, the

1 -- P. 172.
2 -- Plutarch, Lives, Artaxerxes I.
3 -- See Section on Elephantine Papyri.

Athenians sent two-hundred ships against the Persian host. This aroused Artaxerxes and, in 465, he left Persia for Egypt. This army conquered Egypt and could have taken Greece if Darius had been at its head.

During this reign Herodotus, the Great Eastern Historian, visited Egypt as far as Elephantine and tells us the land was as well governed as it was under many princes in the earlier days.

In Babylonia there still were, among his subjects, many Jews, who had not taken advantage of Cyrus' permission to return. In fact, those who did return at that time, says Rogers[1], were the religious fanatics and a few whose financial success was not so good.

Those who remained were about equally divided among those who were successful in business[2], and those who were deeply concerned with the faith of Israel and were busy gathering and codifying law and custom[3].

It was under Artaxerxes I that Nehemiah gained permission to return and raise the walls of Jerusalem. We wonder why the Jews gained so much consideration. We

1 -- P. 178.
2 -- We have found records of many of these --- see H. V. Hilprecht and A. T. Clay, Business Documents of Murashu Sons of Nippur.
3 -- Among these was, probably, Ezra who, with some of them, returned to Jerusalem in 397.

Artaxerxes sent two-hundred ships against the Persian host. This stopped Artaxerxes and, in 449, he left Persia for Egypt. This army conquered Egypt and could have taken Greece if Darius had been at its head.

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1 -- p. 150.

2 -- Ezra found scribes at work in Babylon -- see 8 Ezra 7 -- "Ezra brought up from Babylon with him Jews, priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinim, servants of the house of God."

3 -- Jews in the Jews, Jews in Jews who left Jews in this, returned to Jerusalem in 537.

are inclined to surmise that Persian power was slipping, and, in a desperate attempt to hold what was left, they tried to keep peace by making concessions to conquered peoples. Persia still held Egypt, but Greece was fast becoming a power to be feared upon the Mediterranean. "The vast empire which men of genius had founded, extended, and solidified was filled with cracks, and the signs of its ruin were many[1]. Artaxerxes was unfitted by nature and by the life he had lived to sway the sceptre of mightier men, and his own end was soon to come." He died in 424.

Immediately upon his father's death, Xerxes II came to the throne. There was naught for him but disaster. How long he reigned we do not know, but we do know that his brother, Vahuka, took the field against him and won through clever strategy. He then took the throne as Darius II[2].

Here, too, comes into our line of vision that group of Hebrews which were settlers at Elephantine and Assuan. In our discussion of the Elephantine Papyri, we shall consider the theories of their arrival. Suffice it

1 -- Rogers, p. 190.
2 -- 485 B. C. --- He only ruled for a few days --- in fact he hardly could be called a ruler.

to say that they were Jews and had built a temple to their God. They were not liked by the Egyptians because they were foreigners and because they were Persian subjects with special favors. All was well as long as the Satrap was there to protect them, but when Arsames left for the court of Darius II the Egyptians destroyed the Jews' temple[1]. More details of this event and the life of the Jews in Egypt will be told immediately and in the last part of the next section. Shall we return to Persia again for a moment to see the fall of the colorless Darius II? He had made a passive success in holding the Empire together, but his greatest failure of all was the annihilated army that tried to conquer the mountain folks in the upper Tigris. This failure left Darius with a broken heart and broken health. His last problem was his successor. His oldest son was not eligible, but Darius knew he would claim the throne. In 408 the younger son, Cyrus, was made Satrap of Lydia and began immediately to plan for succeeding his father. Darius died in 404 B. C. He had made no real contribution to the already tottering Empire, leaving it weaker than he found it.

1 -- In 411 B. C. --- cf. Rogers, p. 197.

Arsikas, not Cyrus, ascended the throne while Cyrus returned to his satrapy in Lydia. We shall stop our history here without the unnecessary relating of revolt after revolt which gradually tore the great Persian Empire apart. In 401, Cyrus tried to win the throne through rebellion but was killed near the close of the fifth century.

2. Egypt.

It is almost impossible to tell the story of Persia, as we have just done, without overlapping the contemporary story of Egypt.

In 572, there was a prolonged conflict between the Egyptians and the Greeks which reached the ears of Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon. He immediately set forth to conquer Egypt. We do not know how far he went or how much success he had, but it would appear that Amasis II went on ruling in the twenty-sixth Dynasty, and his son reigned for six months to 528 B. C.[1]

The legend is told that Cambyses of Persia asked for the daughter of Amasis II and got the daughter of Apries, Nitetis, instead. This aroused the anger of the Persian Chief and began his invasion of Egypt. This

1 -- Budge, E. A. Wallis, Egypt, p. 32.

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1 — Duncan, E. A. Nellie. Egypt, p. 72.

took place in 527 and was a fight to the finish, with the Persians winning.

For six years Cambyses ruled in Egypt, then Darius I came to Egypt in 517 B. C. and about that time or earlier, by a few years, the Nile was connected by canal with the Red Sea.

Xerxes came into control here in 486 or 485 and he, too, had a revolt to put down which had started under Khabbesha and lasted about a year. He conscripted troops from the Egyptians to aid in keeping the Empire together for the twenty years he ruled. Others followed, as we noted just above, but Darius I seems to be the only one who was really interested in the welfare of the Egyptians. He made friends among the priesthood and the people as well.

Thus, briefly, we leave Egypt, which, after all, is not a power among the nations in the fifth century. We shall see her again as we consider the Elephantine Papyri.

B. Internal History.

1. The Dark Period (516 - 485).

The temple of which we spoke previously was

completed in the sixth year of Darius, 516 B. C.[1] After this, it would seem that the history of the Jews is a blank page for nearly three decades. It was a period crowded with great events. From Persia came armies in all directions as the Napoleon of the Orient (Darius) striving to extend his rule over all Europe. He strove to annex Greece to his fast growing provinces, but failed, and after the disastrous defeat at Marathon in 490, Egypt revolted, and Darius died[2].

All of this made its mark on world history but effected the Jews little. The most that can be said of them was that Jerusalem had remained, for the thirty years from 516 - 485, unregarded and obscure. It was rather the internal policy of the Empire which effected the Jews. The satrapial system was inaugurated to hold and, at the same time, to protect the vast empire. The Satrap served in the capacity of governor and had as assistants, two appointed officials -- a soldier, who commanded the garrison, and a civilian, as secretary. All three had equal authority, and each acted as a check, to the King, upon the other.

1 -- Kent, p. 151 & 153.
Hunter, P.H., After Exile, p. 214.
Leslie, E.A., Abingdon Bible Commentary, p. 112.
2 -- Kent places date of revolt in Egypt as 486 and Marathon earlier, p. 155.

Syria, with other territory surrounding, formed one of these divisions of government with the seat, most probably, at Damascus. Although the colonies were forced to pay taxes, these requirements were not too stringent. Though they were forced to render service in the army, the folks at home led their normal existence. If they met these two requirements, and obeyed the orders of the local rulers, they were permitted to live, worship, and rule, in minor matters, as they pleased.

As long as Darius reigned at Susa and Zerubbabel ruled as Pekah in Jerusalem, all went well. What became of the latter, however, we do not know. In Zechariah 4:9, the last reference is made to him in a form of prophecy that "The hands of Zechariah have laid the foundation of the temple, his hands shall also finish it." No one seems to know, however, whether the prophecy came true or not. Hunter[1] suggests that tradition has it that Zerubbabel returned to Babylon once more and died while there. It is also highly doubtful if he remained to see the completion of the temple; for his name is outstandingly missing from the story of the dedication. So it was, that the last of the old line of David to achieve fame or reputation faded

1 -- Vol. I, p. 220.

from the dusty pages of history.

Any number of things might have happened to his rule in Jerusalem. He might have been called to the throne of Darius on business and fallen ill while there. He might have been removed for helping the Jews too much. Perhaps he was forced to resign because of hostile feelings toward him in Jerusalem. Perhaps, he lost hope and gave up in despair. At any rate, the artist failed to finish the picture at this point. Thus the people which looked for great leadership from Zerubbabel were disappointed, and finally succumbed to the inevitable and gave up again the dream of a restored nation, though it was largely through his help that the Temple had been built.

Next to the finishing of this work, the heart of the Jews was bound up in the reconstruction to the walls of their beloved City. If that was not done, neither the temple nor the populace itself was safe. Until the death of Darius this was not permitted. When Xerxes mounted the throne[1], however, the cry went up again to build the walls. Of course, Samaria, a fortified town but a day's journey from Jerusalem and the seat of a higher official, opposed such a move, and the plea was rejected.

1 -- 485 B.C., cf. Leslie, E.A., Abingdon Commentary, p. 112.

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Any number of things might have happened to his rule in Jerusalem. He might have been called to the throne of Darius on business and failing in while there. He might have been removed for helping the Jews too much. Perhaps he was forced to resign because of hostile feelings toward him in Jerusalem. Perhaps, he lost hope and gave up in despair. At any rate, the artist failed to finish the picture at this point. Those the people which looked for great leadership from Zerubbabel were disappointed, and finally succumbed to the inevitable and gave up again the dream of a restored nation, though it was largely through his help that the Temple had been built.

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1 - Ibid. p.7., cf. Isaiah, 7.1., Interpretation Commentary, p.

Shortly thereafter, the fears of the Jews found grounds as the site of Jerusalem was the scene of much of the violence of the Persian conquest of Egypt. Joel, in the 3rd chapter of his writings calls our attention to innocent Judea blood that was shed at the hand of Egypt and Edom. Even the Persians laid waste the land as they marched thru[1].

It was in this Persian conquest that Babylon, arch-enemy of the Jews, was destroyed[2]. Thus, the Yahweh of the Jews was again greater than the Bel of the Babylonians.

If we are to accept the story of Joel as history, we find that the nation of our interest suffered more under this rule than under any condition in memory[3]. After Zerubbabel, the rulers were, for the most part, foreigners.. ..one after another of them who ate from the fat of the land while the Jews starved[4]. In Nehemiah and Lamentations we find testimonials to the oppression and utter poverty of the people. For the next quarter of a century there is a gap in Jewish History.

1 -- Joel 1.
2 -- 539 B.C.---cf. Leslie, E.A., Abingdon Commentary, p. 111.
3 -- Joel 1.
4 -- Nehemiah 5:14, 15.

Hunter[1] suggests that the Book of Esther fills the gap here mentioned, at least, for the Jews who were out of the homeland. If we can accept this narration as history, if the events recorded were not written down too long after their occurrence, if the story is not a figment of someone's imagination — the picture which is given us emblazons a contrast with the good fortune of the exiled members of the race standing out in relief against the poverty and hopelessness of the Jews in the Promised Land.

However, such is unlikely, if not impossible — for not once in all the Book is Jerusalem mentioned, nor the Holy Land, nor is the home of Jehovah found upon its pages. Truly, this is naught but fable.

As we have said, with the loss of Zerubbabel all the Persian officials were foreigners. The only official to whom the Jews could turn was the High Priest. He belonged to the Zadokites and was the most prominent figure in the community. Gradually this group gained power until they regained all they had lost after the return of the exiles. From a secondary position in every field he now became chief of secular as well as religious matters — solving all the problems that were outside the jurisdiction of the Persian overlords.

1 -- Vol. I, p. 237.

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1 — Ibid, p. 227.

The High Priests were the aristocracy, and they were satisfied to remain that way. Realizing that, if they were to remain in position as a privileged class, something must be done to get their fellowmen out of the realm of slaves and paupers, they opened new roads of activity for them, the end of which far exceeded anyone's expectations. Sixty years had shown, quite vividly, that their "laissez faire" attitude was unsuccessful. Exclusiveness either between factions of Jews or between Jews and Gentiles based upon a moral plane when physical barriers could not be raised was useless.

Ezra[1] tells us of mixed marriages or marriages with non-Jews which, it would appear, were entered into deliberately as a policy approved by the highest authorities in the land. Ezra was not the only one[2] who opposed the move, but the minority could only protest.

There is an interesting though at this point. To state it let me quote verbatim[3]: "Weak in numbers and in material resources, robbed of their liberties, impotent even for self-defense, they were feared by the very enemies who trampled on them, and respected by those

1 -- Chapter 9.
2 -- Chapter 9:4.
3 -- Hunter I, p. 257.

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There is an interesting thought at this point. To state it let me quote verbatim : "Weak in numbers and in material resources, robbed of their liberties, isolated even for self-defense, they were forced by the very enemies who trampled on them, and respected by those

1 -- Chapter 9.
2 -- Chapter 10.
3 -- Chapter I, p. 290.

who insulted them. There were obvious reasons for the Jews seeking the alliance of the Gentiles, material advantages to be gained; but quite other motives must have actuated the Gentiles in courting alliance with the Jews."

Even the writer of Trito-Isaiah[1] spoke out in favor of Gentile equality as long as they all worshipped the same Divine Creator and Protector. This solved the immediate and external political difficulties, but it was a partial good at best. "If Israel was to fulfill its high mission to the Gentile world, it must still, at this stage of its development, keep separate from the Gentile world.....The time had not yet come for breaking down the fence and admitting the Gentiles wholesale into"[2] the Jewish faith. As yet, the Jews were not strong enough to hold the middle ground between the facts of the past and the dreams of the future. This new move could not help but lower the standards of the Hebrew people. It was here that the evils commenced which Malachi so fiercely condemned a few years later. An unenforced part of the law soon lowered the adherence to all law, and life began to skid with increased momentum down the grade of retrogression.

1 -- Isaiah 56:3, 6, 7,
2 -- Hunter I, p. 258 f.

While these people were loosening their hold on the moral code they had developed in past centuries, the Jews, still in captivity, in the Empire were becoming more strict as the days went by. Many real developments in Judaism came from the exiles. The Sabbath day in its richer aspects came from the Babylonian Jews. Ezekiel says[1]: "they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths." A yet later writer adds[2]: "Blessed is the man who keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it." Not only was it of value in itself, but it was also a bond of union for the exiles. Every seventh day thus reminded the Jew quite forcibly of his ancestry. Intellectually also the Jews of Babylon surpassed their brothers. Forced to live with foreign cultures and in new environments, with the educated best of that world they could not help but gain much of intellectual development. It seems impossible, yet it is true, that the work of fusion which soldiers could not make with swords, which the prophets could not achieve with the "power of abstract ideas"[3], was accomplished by the Book of the Law[4]. This was the only remaining ground upon

1 -- Ezekiel 44:24.
2 -- Isa. 56:2.
3 -- Hunter, p. 273.
4 -- Code of Ezekiel - 40-48 and the Holiness Code, Lev. 17-26 are meant. Reference in detail will be given at a later point in this paper.

which disunited Jews could again stand united. The Law of Moses took the place of the cry of the prophets, and a group of Scribes or Sopherim take their place in the parade of history of Judaism. These men copied the law. Some of them went farther than to copy, and Jeremiah exposes the "lying stylus of the Sopherim."[1] They did not have an altar, but they had their manuscripts. They could not offer sacrifices, but they could read and teach.

At first, these men worked independently, then later, in groups or small communities with the same interest. Likewise, at first, the groups were interested mainly in getting the law before the people. Later, they began to teach it as an infallible code of life, solving all problems. From there it was but a simple step to the belief that law observance made the perfect life.

2. The Remainder of the Century (460 - 400 B. C.)

a. Biblical History.

1.) Malachi.

It was this Persian domination just described which chafed the Hebrew peoples. Once again Israel was forced to set her hopes on the future, and, in so doing,

1 -- Jeremiah 8:8.

we see a flash of light play for a moment upon the condition and temper of the restored exiles in the little book of Malachi. Most authorities agree that Malachi means "my messenger" and is not the name of the prophet after all. H. P. Smith[1] suggests that he did not sign his correct name because of the disrepute into which the prophets had fallen after the non-fulfillment of the hopes of Haggai and Zechariah. His was a voice but nothing more. What the voice said leads us to believe that we know what happened from the dedication of the Temple to the present time (460). Apparently the religious fervor, which developed as the temple was completed and worship took place again, did not last for any great length of time. Perhaps the death of Zerubbabel extinguished the last faint hopes of the revival of a United Israel. The loss of hope has its counterpart in the loss of faith — both in one's self and in one's God. When that happens, man degenerates. The community faced a crisis and failed to win the day. Gradually conditions must have become worse until all those customs which had been relegated to the past were again in vogue. Indeed, the lack of morality must have spread to the Temple itself, for we find the

1 -- Old Testament History, p. 360.

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1 — Oil, Jerusalem History, p. 264.

prophets crying out[1] for someone to shut the doors of the temple.

It would seem to me that the decay of the people's faith in God and the ultimate triumph of good is the outstanding message of the prophet. In fact, he cries out in rebellious complaint to those who should be aiding these lost folk in the finding of God's will. Everything is wrong. Truly, everyone is "disappointed and ill at ease."[2] Faith is gone; oppression is ever-present; old distinctions between the upper and lower classes have reappeared; maintenance of temple worship and the priesthood has become a burden of expense; the injunctions of the law are disobeyed; Sabbath observance is neglected; and there no longer remains any desire to keep Israel a distinct people with clear blood.

It is not at all surprising that a prophetic voice is heard, however, weakly, at this time. It seems that even the prophet has lost hope in the future. He sees the evils, and he sees the possible solution, but there seems little hope that his advice will be followed. Prophecy, apparently, "feels itself unable to cope adequately with the moral situation and is conscious of its

1 -- Malachi 1:10.
2 -- Montefiore, Hibbert Lectures, p. 295.

own decline."[1] We shall consider the book as literature later, since our interest here is mainly history.

2.) Ezra.

The dark period from the dedication of the Temple until the middle of the fifth century is certainly the most difficult handicap to this study, but it is far from the only problem confronting us. In fact, a lack of knowledge is not as misleading as false history or mistaken facts might be.

We no sooner get out of the darkness into the first rays of light than we find ourselves face to face with a new difficulty. When was Ezra's period? Did the work of this character precede or follow that of Nehemiah? The traditional view places Ezra first. In order to understand the situation, we shall advance that theory first in its age-old clothes and then set about to find our solution. The thesis is that Ezra came to Jerusalem from Babylon about 458 B. C. At this point, many authorities part company. If we follow this group[2], we are led to the opinion that the hand that rocked his cradle rocked also the cradle of Judaism. "In Jewish tradition he figures as a second Moses." Hunter places Ezra in the very

1 -- McFadyen, Approach to the O. T., p. 234.
2 -- Hunter, A. E., ch. 15; Ottley, S. H. H., p. 235-7. Driver, L. O. T., p. 540-554; Bennett, Rel. of P.E.P., p. 90 ff; Creelman, I. O. T., 257 ff, etc.

heart of the century that we are studying.

Ezra belonged by birth to the priesthood and to the highest branch, for he could trace his ancestry thru the High Priests to Aaron. That illustrious background was enough to give him fame and early the people called him "the Priest"[1]. Even that was not his main task, and it was not long until folk spoke of him as "Ezra the Sopher". He it was who gave the most to the openings of a new era.

Then the word arrived in Babylon of the change of policy in Jerusalem. To many foreign Jews this made no difference —— but to Ezra it was a mistake of the highest order. Ezra gets the credit for placing Jerusalem at the center of the new Judaism. He realized that success in the new venture depended upon a spiritual center, a holy city to which all eyes should turn. Thus, perhaps, came the great dream of teaching the law to ignorant Israel[2]. Ezra not only knew the law —— he also religiously kept it.

We do not know when he and his school of followers left for Jerusalem; but we can be almost certain that it was not in the reign of Xerxes, for his interests did not run toward permissions of that type. In

1 -- Ezra 7:11; 10:10; and Nehemiah 8:2.
2 -- Ezra 7:10.

465, Artaxerxes ascended the throne with a good-natured, easy-going attitude. This amiability was perhaps approached by Ezra in search of royal favor. Artaxerxes accepted the Jews in his court which no doubt helped the Sopher's case along. In Ezra 7:11 ff we find what is supposed to be the copy of the permit the King gave Ezra[1].

The King's sanction gained, there were three tasks left. Ezra needed men, money, and authority. All this he received; and "the novel feature of this edict of Artaxerxes was the position it assigned to a man of the Jewish race, the authority it gave him over his countrymen."[2] He was not only to rule his own people as Chief Judge of Law, but also those beyond the river. Thus laden, he departed upon a mission of reform.

All seemed to be on Ezra's side until he arrived in Jerusalem and discovered that Artaxerxes was more powerful in Susa or Babylon than in Palestine. Then he also found that even Kings change their minds. He met adversity, which perhaps was well, as he changed his tactics and worked in far softer and more kindly methods than he previously had planned. He gathered his followers on the

1 -- I doubt the veracity of the permit, but there must have been one of some kind, since permission was given.
2 -- Hunter, p. 298.

banks of the Ahava, an unknown stream, in March 459 ready for the pilgrimage. Three days[1], Ezra spent in arranging the marching numbers. Purity of race was an absolute requirement. Including women and children there were probably from 6,000 to 8,000 people in this imposing cavalcade[2]. Surely, Ezra must have had a powerful hold on his countrymen with the exception of the Levites which he had to send for to make his group complete.

Finally, they departed after a fast and a pledge to God as well as a refusal to accept an armed guard. Eighty-eight years had elapsed since Zerubbabel had taken the first group home over this trail. The first group were sure of the coming age of Jehovah. The second were sure they had the only solution and remedy for the mess the first group had made.

The pilgrims, by necessity, travelled slowly over roundabout routes spending three and one-half months en route[3]. Apparently the trip was not only a long one, but also arduous[4]. Then they arrived at Jerusalem. Ezra's reputation had reached Jerusalem

1 -- Ezra 8:15.
2 -- Hunter, p. 306; cf. Bennett, p. 90 (2,000 men besides women & children); and cf. Ottley, p. 235 (1,600 men)
3 -- Ezra 7:9.
4 -- Ezra 8:31.

ahead of him, and he was the foremost man of his nation for the time being. The fourth day they presented their gifts to the Temple, after overruling the Zadokite priest, and then, for five months, the curtain remains down on the activities the Chronicler relates.

Doubtless, the work began at once of educating the people from the complete Torah, while Ezra felt out his way along the road of future reforms. The worst evil of all seemed to be the Gentile marriages and all of the contamination as regards blood, law, and religion they carried with them. But what was he to do about it? The law, itself, was not positive. The older law, the Deuteronomic code[1], which had been the statute book of the second Temple, did not prohibit them and did not make them even practices to be discouraged[2]. Now Ezra brought the Priestly code[3] from Babylon with him, but Jerusalem did not yet know of it, so, its authority must be established before he could hand down decision upon its statements. The permission to do this certainly would not be forthcoming from the Zadokites, for the two groups were already at swords points. The only remaining method was followed by Ezra — he put the proposition before the

1 -- Deuteronomy 12 - 26, 28.
2 -- Deuteronomy 21:10-14.
3 -- Hunter II, p. 12, cf. Ottley, p. 236.

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Nonetheless, the work begun at once of educating the people from the complete torch, while even fell out his way along the road of future reform. The worst evil of all seemed to be the Gentile marriages and all of the contamination as regards blood, law, and religion they carried with them. But what was he to do about it? The law, itself, was not positive. The older law, the Deuteronomic code, which had been the statute book of the second Temple, did not prohibit them and did not make them even practices to be discouraged. Now Ezra brought the Priestly code from Babylon with him, but Jerusalem did not yet know of it. So, his authority must be established before he could hand down decision upon its statements. The determination to do this certainly would not be forthcoming from the Zadokites, for the two groups were already at swords points. The only remaining method was followed by Ezra — he put the proposition before the

1 -- Deuteronomy 17:2-20.
2 -- Deuteronomy 21:10-14.
3 -- Number 12, 13, 14, or, Ezra 9, 10.

people. It is an unusual scene which is pictured in Ezra 9 and 10. Though the method used is common enough even today, the whole-hearted sincerity was what won the day. In Ezra 10:5 we hear "all Israel" take the oath to cease this intermarrying and to send back these foreign wives and their children. Here, the High Priests gained a compromise. A National Assembly[1] was to be called by proclamation and render the final decision. Again Ezra won, and again the other side claimed a hearing. Even the presentation of the defense was in vain. The people had given their decision, and from the final court there was no appeal. Still unsatisfied, Ezra stood out for the immediate trial of all wrongdoers before the multitude, but here his own followers balked. That was not fair. The precedent was established; the individual cases could follow. The compromise plan established a special court with Ezra as president. It was to be a circuit court, meeting in the surrounding towns and villages. Both sides agreed and in ten days the work was under way. "All is not gold that glitters," however, and Ezra found much to make the going hard, so difficult, indeed, that the whole reform scheme was in danger of collapse. This was the first step of this era to make the Jews an isolated group.

1 -- Ezra 10:14 ff.

people. It is an unusual scene which is pictured in Ezra 9 and 10. Though the method used is common enough even today, the whole-hearted sincerity was what was the key. In Ezra 10:3 we hear "all Israel" take the oath to cease their intermarriage and to send back these foreign wives and their children. Here, the High Priests guided a cooperative, a National assembly, was to be called by proclamation and render the final decision. Again Ezra won, and again the other made claimed a hearing. Even the presentation of the defense was in vain. The people had given their decision, and from the final court there was no appeal. Still unsatisfied, Ezra stood out for the immediate trial of all concerned before the multitude, but here his own followers balked. That was not fair. The precedent was established; the individual cause could follow. The commonwealth had established a special court with Ezra as president. It was to be a circuit court, meeting in the surrounding towns and villages. Both sides agreed and in two days-the work was under way. "All is not gold that glitters," however, and Ezra found much to make the going hard, so difficult, indeed, that the whole reform became was in danger of collapse. This was the first step of this era to make the Jews an isolated group.

1 -- Ezra 10:14-17.

"It was the first invocation of an authority which proclaimed itself the equal of the written Torah, and, in time, became its superior; the first imposition of that yoke of traditionalism which was never henceforth shaken off, which succeeding centuries weighted more heavily and bound on more firmly, and which sits to this day on the necks of the Jewish people."[1]

Not only were the politicians opposed to this move, but also the last of the prophetic schools. They had seen the vision of a universal God, and this step could only be a backward one. So strong was the feeling, so Hunter says[2], that many wrote their opinions out in prose or poetry. Two of these have been preserved. Ruth, the gentle, loving, Gentile woman is made the heroine of the Old Testament's most beautiful love story. With a pastoral setting so common in Palestine, a bit of history, and a wealth of vivid imagination, the author seeks to win his point of universal toleration. What a powerful rebuke a simple tale may become.

Then, there is Jonah. It has the same purpose of warning and reproof, but it tells an entirely different story in a different way. Here is another allegory like

1 -- Hunter II, p. 39.
2 -- Hunter II, chapter 3.

"It was the first invocation of an authority which proclaimed itself the equal of the written Torah, and, in time, became its superior; the first imposition of that yoke of traditionalism which was never henceforth shaken off, which accompanied centuries watched more heavily and bound ever more firmly, and which exists to this day on the necks of the Jewish people."[1]

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Then, there is Jonah. It has the same purpose of writing and teaching, but it tells an entirely different story in a different way. Here is another allegory like Ruth.

1 - Rubin, p. 47.
2 - Rubin, p. 48.

Job, only less perfected, as the author tries to put too much into his tale. Jonah is Israel, entrusted with a great mission to the world. Jonah tries to escape the task and suffers for it. This is more powerful than the other tale, and, I imagine, that many folk were strongly moved by one or the other of them.

Despite criticism, suggestion, or appeal the work went on until in Ezra 10:17 he lists the work as done in simple, blunt language. Once again Hagar leaves the tents of Judah and takes Ishmael with her. No agony of remorse, no appeals for mercy, nothing could swerve the relentless Ezra from the path of cruelty that he thought was right. Once again the legalistic won against the human element in religion. In three months the court tried many of the high officials and laymen, then we lose sight of both the idea and Ezra himself.

The first moves of the adversaries had failed. The next was to write to the King and appeal for the removal of Ezra. We cannot be sure that any such protests went to Susa from Jerusalem, though Ewald in his History of Israel[1] suggests that possibility. If someone did, it might well have been the officials of the neighboring tribes to whom the wives and children had been returned

1 -- Ewald, History of Israel, Vol. V, p. 107.

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1 -- Smith, History of Israel, Vol. V, p. 107.

so rudely.

On all sides during the dozen or so years of silence, opposition and reaction must have set in, and finally even Ezra, himself, must have sometimes doubted his own policy. But he was a zealot and refused to compromise or admit his possible error. To save the situation, especially in its outside danger aspects, Ezra determined to wall Jerusalem[1]. Jerusalem must have its gates shut against the Gentiles. Thus, again, Ezra jumps into the limelight of popular opinion.

But the plan was not to be of long standing. It seems that Megabyzus[1], the man who won for Artaxerxes the final great battle of the Egyptian rebellion, had succeeded by some means in annexing Syria as an independent state. Artaxerxes, after two attempts to conquer the rebel, gave in. This made a desperate situation for the followers of Ezra; for their whiplash of power had come from the Great King, and now his power "beyond the river" was gone. Almost immediately, the Samaritans took advantage of the situation and sent a clever letter to the King. We find it in Ezra 4:11-16. Strategy underlies every sentence of this manuscript and won its point with Artaxerxes; his answer forbade the completion of the walls. The Samaritans

1 -- Hunter II, p. 94 ff.

so tudeir.

On all sides during the seven or so years of alliance, opposition and reaction must have set in, and finally even Ezra, himself, must have sometimes doubted his own policy. But he was a zealot and refused to compromise or admit his possible error. To save the situation, especially in the outside danger regards, Ezra determined to wall Jerusalem . Jerusalem must have its gates shut against the Gentiles. Thus, again, Ezra jumps into the limelight of popular opinion.

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1 -- Nehemiah 11, 4, ca 16.

did not hesitate in tearing down the walls and burning the gates.

Though they went no further in their destruction, they had not only done the task, but also almost completely ruined all of Ezra's prestige. His "power and popularity fell with the walls of Jerusalem."[1]

We cannot help but feel a bit of respect for Ezra after this event,despite his possible mistake. He might easily have returned to Babylon and regained his former reputation. But no —— he remained and fought for the same principles with the same tenacity, despite the slow but sure reversal of his policy. "In this unfaltering confidence, during the months and years of activity arrested, and hope deferred, Ezra waited in Jerusalem till his day should come."[2]

Even those who place Ezra before Nehemiah realize that "some of the most complicated problems in Hebrew history as well as in literary criticism of the Old Testament gather about the books of Ezra and Nehemiah."[3]

Some scholars, like H. P. Smith[4], arrive independently at a date which would put both Ezra and Nehemiah outside of our consideration.

1 -- Hunter II, p. 96.
2 -- Ibid, p. 98.
3 -- McFadyen, p. 332.
4 -- O. T. History, p. 382.
5 -- 385 B. C. ff.

did not hesitate in tearing down the walls and burning the cities.

Though they went to Jerusalem in their destruction, they had not only done the least, but also almost completely ruined all of Israel's possessions. His "sewer and boundarity fell with the walls of Jerusalem."[1]

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Some scholars, like H. P. Smith, assume indeterminity of a date which would put both Ezra and Nehemiah outside of our consideration.

1 — Ibid., p. 70.
2 — Ibid., p. 70.
3 — Smith, H. P., p. 400.

Despite a quite common agreement upon a date several years before Nehemiah, such is not all the evidence we possess. In fact, though we respect the scholarship behind such works as Ewald, Hunter, Ottley, Wade, McFadyen, and the like, we are moved to comment on the dearth of actual fact they present in this case or the arguments they bring forward. In truth, most of the authorities consulted in the section of this paper just past have based their case on the lone argument from tradition. Often, this is a stumbling block to real scholarship, and yet it is often resorted to in order to save criticism. In this instance we must consider the arguments of the opposition and then choose our ground.

There are seven original sources, or, at least, seven primary sources, from which we can glean information. In some cases the information can be classed as history while others smack of editorial addition and comment[1].

The first source lies in those parts of the book of Ezra which seem to have been taken from some record of Ezra himself. We credit them to him because they are written in the first person. They are Ezra 7:27, 28 and 8:1-34[2]. Oesterley further suggests about Ezra 7:1-10;

1 -- Oesterley, W.O.E., A. History of Israel, Vol. II, ch. 10.
2 -- Oesterley, p. 112.

9:1-10:44; Nehemiah 7:73b-8:12, 13-18; 9 and possibly 10, that "In these the narrative is all about Ezra, and he is always spoken of in the third person; but the Chronicler's hand has been so busy that they must be used with caution."[1]

The second source lies in the purported permission of Artaxerxes for Ezra and his group to return to Israel. It is found in Ezra 7:12-26. One wonders, as he reads this document, if it is authentic. Several points arouse our curiosity or our suspicion. In the first place, why should a powerful and successful King have taken so much interest in a group of his slaves whose home is in a far-off land? It is audacious to even think an Oriental ruler should show so much interest in his subjects, let alone his slaves.

But, even if we accepted the possibility of such an interest, the edict is too strong for wholehearted acceptance. To appoint a slave as governor of a province with power to rule and to put to death those who would not conform to his desires or religion is far too much for one to accept.

Further, how did a Persian King know so much of Jewish customs as to have at his tongue's end such phrases as "cult-personnel", "Nethinim", "freewill offerings",

1 -- Oesterley, p. 112.

"meat offerings", and "drink offerings"? Then he was supposed to be familiar with the distinction between Priests and Levites, singers and porters, and so forth[1]. Perhaps there was such an edict, but we can go little further than the acceptance of the bare possibility of a permission to return.

The third group of passages can be classed as the Memoirs of Nehemiah. Here we find more apparently authentic information than in Ezra and some that helps us much in this problem. We shall include here Nehemiah 1:1-7:73a, 11:1-2, 13:4-31 and possibly 10 and 11:3-26. Chapters 12:27-47 and 13:1-3 appear to have come from the original source but probably were blue penciled by the compiling editor[2].

From these very important passages we turn to the Temple Records. We find lists which might well have been copied from this source in Nehemiah 12:1-26; Ezra 4:6-23 and 5:1-6, 15. Josephus[3] tells us how carefully these records were kept, so they were probably available to the chronicler.

The "Greek Ezra"[4] corrects many of the errors

1 -- Oesterley, p. 112.
2 -- Oesterley, p. 113.
3 -- "Against Apion", found in Whiston, Wm., The Works of Flavius Josephus, Vol. II, p. 404 ff.
4 -- I have not consulted this source.

of the Ezra Nehemiah[1].

We gain much assistance likewise from the recently discovered Elephantine Papyri which will be mentioned in more detail in the last part of this paper.

The last section named is the work of Josephus[2]. This, however, gives us little authentic information beyond that which we find in the canon itself[3].

From these sources we can gain the history of the middle century, and they will also aid us in placing Ezra in our chronological table. As we have said, both the original chronicler and many authors advance the theory of Ezra's first arrival on the scene; there are strong arguments of a different nature.

In the first place, Oesterley[4] points out, if they were contemporaries, there must have been two governors over Israel at the same time and both in Jerusalem. Though that is possible, it is not very probable that such was the case. It is true that it has been suggested that they worked together, but in some cases[5] they took independent action which two men would not likely have done under such a dual government as is proposed.

1 -- Oesterley, p. 113 ff.
2 -- see bibliography.
3 -- Oesterley, p. 114.
4 -- Oesterley, p. 115.
5 -- (i.e. mixed marriages).

Again it is interesting to note that the very passages in which the cooperation is mentioned are the passages which bear all the ear marks of being editor's notes[1]. Nehemiah 8:9 tells of Nehemiah taking part in Ezra's reading of the Law. If Nehemiah did take part in this momentous ceremony, why did he never mention it in his memoirs? In the Greek Text, the name Nehemiah does not appear. In Nehemiah 10:1, it appears and again in 12:26, but both statements are challenged. And even if these three passages are accepted, there still remains the doubt based upon the fact that two men with the same goal, working at the same time, would surely have something to say about each other in their memoirs, instead of just three isolated statements.

Another stumbling block to the traditional view lies in the two descriptions of Jerusalem. When Nehemiah arrived he found[2]: "the city was wide and large; but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded." When Ezra arrived[3] he found a large multitude of people. If they were contemporaries, how could this take place? If Ezra came first, where did the people go before the arrival of Nehemiah? The logical answer, it

1 -- Oesterley, p. 115.
2 -- Nehemiah 7:4.
3 -- Ezra 10:1.

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1 -- Cornelly, p. 315.
2 -- Nehemiah 7:4.
-- Ezra 10:1.

would seem, that Nehemiah came about a generation before Ezra. Another small but conclusive argument is found in Ezra 9:9 where he states that the walls are built, and again in 4:12 the walls are finished. Further, Nehemiah 3:1 calls Eliashib the High Priest, while Ezra[1] lived during the time of Jehohanan, the son of Eliashib[2].

This last evidence is further used, when in the first and second Elephantine Papyri[3], we find the date of Jehohanan of Jerusalem as 408.

Thus, the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah's day was Artaxerxes I who rules from 464-424 B. C., while Ezra came under the order of Artaxerxes II who ruled from 404-359 B. C. Using these figures, we compute Ezra's date as 397 B. C. —— three years beyond the end of the fifth century. We are sorry to lose him, but we shall consider him again, briefly, toward the close of the thesis.

In support of this stand we have taken we have Oesterley, of course. Then we are corroborated by Dr. Leslie in the Chronology of the Old Testament[4]. Barton[5] dates the coming of Ezra as 398 B. C. Peritz[6] states

1 -- Ezra 10:6.
2 -- Oesterley, p. 117, suggests "grandson".
3 -- Oesterley, p. 117.
4 -- Abingdon Bible Commentary, p. 112.
5 -- P. 339.
6 -- P. 260.

the case as follows: "In the Chronicler's view..... Ezra appears first on the scene, and is also the last to disappear. But on a critical examination of the data it appears that this prominence of the priest over the laymen is due to the manner in which the material itself has been arranged, and that it is contrary to indications which the material itself furnishes and to historic probability." He dates Ezra[1] as 397 B. C. Kent[2] tells us that those who hold to the date of 458 are forced to list the expedition as a failure. He further says the earlier date is "not only highly improbably, but practically impossible". He then substantiates most of the evidence presented already in this paper. It would appear that we should close the gap and consider that Nehemiah is the second character to appear on the stage of the fifth century following immediately upon the steps of Malachi. To him we turn.

3.) Nehemiah.

In 444 or 445 B. C., another character ascended the bright trail of the stars and again the pages turn to a brighter and happier chapter of Jewish history. Nehemiah was born a Jew, but by environment he was a

1 -- Peritz, p. 262.
2 -- Kent, History of Jewish People, "Babylonian, Persian and Greek Periods", p. 197.

Persian. No one knows how this man came to the court of the King. All we know is that in him we find another example of a Jew who, through perseverance, personality, and power, reached an enviable position in the court of the captive nation. His task was cupbearer, and his influence was great. We can be glad that the memoirs of his early history were preserved. In no other book of the Old Testament is the character of the author so clearly stamped as here. Surely it will always hold a unique position in Jewish history. Here is a man with every opportunity to develop his ego. Here is a situation of which a lesser man would have taken advantage for his own personal gain. Here were influences which would tend to make him frivilous and unreal, instead we find him natural, brave, and unselfish. "The King had no trustier servant; Israel, no more devoted son."[1] Nehemiah is an example of what the exile did for many Jews and a portrait of the first layman who gave all he had to his nation and his church.

The first chapter of his story tells us of the coming of a group from Jerusalem to beg his aid. They arrived in the summer of 444 or 445 and told him their pitiful tale. In the East, one must always show a happy

1 -- Hunter II, p. 102.

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1 -- Duster II, 5, 1ua.

countenance before the court. For months, though brooding in silence, sorrowing in the privacy of his own room, he kept his secret to himself. Then, one day Artaxerxes saw for a second behind the mask of happiness and demanded an explanation. Despite a fear of the consequences[1], he told his story. The plea for permission to leave, which followed the tale, was granted —— with the reservation that Nehemiah should return after a certain period of time.

As soon as possible, he left for Jerusalem, carrying with him not only permission to rebuild the walls, but the governorship of Judah and many other concessions of value. He met opposition, but he was a man who knew men and could win them to his side. From three outside sources, at least, and from the inside came difficulties, but the master gentleman could cope with them all with patience, calmness, and resourcefulness.

His first stroke of genius came in his arrival. No one knew who he was for three days. Indeed, he completed his inspection of the walls by night that he might see what was to be done before he took anyone into his confidence.

Satisfied with his inspection he assumed his position as pekah without pomp or ceremony. Still he let time pass before bringing forward his proposal, while he

1 -- Nehemiah 2:1.

studied the people with whom he was to deal. He won their respect and loyalty by ruling and keeping the promise that neither he nor his suite should cost the citizens a single shekel[1]. Then, with an appeal of national pride he sold to them the proposition of rebuilding the walls. Now the plan was out, outside and inside opposition would arise, speed was at a premium. Hired labor was out of the question. Further the wall must all be built at once and of equal strength. To do this the leader divided the wall area in sections and assigned each section to a group to build. Each was thus bound in honor and patriotism not to let his work get behind any other. Each group had their task to do which would ever stand not only as a protection to the city but also a monument to itself.

The North Wind brings taunts and jeers from the Gentiles. Undaunted and unafraid the work goes on. The governors of the North are surprised; they are angry, and they plan to unite and attack the workers. At first, Nehemiah relied on his mandate from the King. That failing, he took the sword to protect the half-finished wall. His very audacity put heart in his people, and, for the first time since the fall of the kingdom, they revived their

1 -- Nehemiah 5:14 and 15.

warlike energy, put their backs to the wall and prepared to fight.

This was a new tactic for the Jews, and open battle was too near treason to the King to be palatable to the advancing hordes. So we find the danger past and the work being resumed, but under military orders. All men worked with their sword by their side, sentinels were posted by day and Nehemiah and his guards watched by night. It was a thrilling experience for these people, who for so long had been the doormat for surrounding tribes. Probably "the weeks of toil and peril did more to raise the character of the Jewish people than all the decades since the return from exile."[1] National self-respect was returning, after so long smouldering. Trust in God and self-reliance had won a battle without bloodshed. What a lesson they learned!

Walls were not all Nehemiah built in those days. He built men; he built a nation; and then they came to him with their social question, told the story of the injustices of class wealth and distinction — they wanted bread, and their story was as old as time, and the truth of it echoes through the hills and valleys of the present day. The great heart heard the call. His

1 -- Hunter II, p. 147.

own life was one from which he could speak with honesty. His own private fortune had diminished. He had given to the poor. He had aided the state unasked —— and now he sought, in others, the same action in the name of God. Either through honest desire or cowering fear, the rich followed his lead, and the second task was accomplished with but one threat to those who did not keep their promise[1].

From this point the popularity of Nehemiah was unquestioned in the common people, but one does not doubt, who has a semblance of knowledge of human nature, that the hatred among the higher classes did not abate. It must have gained in momentum as their profits were wrenched from their grasp. Now the wall was completed; the doors were yet to be hung, when more trouble appeared. This new attack was against Nehemiah and him alone —— a compliment of the highest order. The enemies wanted a friendly conference with the new governor[2]. It was refused. Then an open letter came[3] speaking of rumors and inviting him to visit the writer and deny them. Again he refused and openly denounced the methods used[4]. Then they tried to intimidate the leader[5] but to no avail. Then a

1 -- Nehemiah 5:12, 13.
2 -- Nehemiah 6:3, 4.
3 -- Nehemiah 6:5-7.
4 -- Nehemiah 6:8, 9.
5 -- Kent, p. 178.

letter came to cease building, but work was done, and there was no order to tear down; thus, the wall was completed after fifty-two days[1]. This period of time seems almost incredible though Hunter[2] holds that it was possible. Ewald[3] suggests an error in translation. Graetz supposes the fifty-two days are from the interruption just mentioned. Josephus suggests the time was two years and four months. At any rate, though we cannot settle the date, the wall was completed. Once again, they had faith in God and themselves.

Nehemiah made the Levites the guards of the gates and planned out for them the details of their duties, perhaps, with his departure in view.

The new wall followed the lines of the old, but it did not enclose 10,000 citizens, while the old walls housed some 50,000[4]. The next task was to people Jerusalem.

As Nehemiah invites others into the city we can well imagine that only those were eligible who had no taint of Gentile blood in them. Every tenth man on whom the lot fell must either move into the Holy City or find a substitute.

1 -- Nehemiah 6:15.
2 -- Hunter, p. 170.
3 -- History, Vol. V, p. 157.
4 -- II Kings 24:14.

When this was done, they dedicated the walls.

About 432 B. C. Nehemiah's permission apparently ran out and he returned to the Court of Artaxerxes after his twelve years stay in Judah. "After certain days" he received the royal permission to return to Jerusalem. The first visit seems to have been mainly interested in building walls and building men. In this second visit, Nehemiah appears as a religious reformer, much of which is lost to us. We do have four subjects considered[1].

Apparently during his absence, short as it may have been, a foreigner had been accepted into the Temple and there took part in the service and even lived within the confines of the Temple itself. Herein, we see human nature in the raw. Man will, for some reason, revert to his lowest tendencies as soon as outward pressure is removed. Here we find the Jews returning to friendly relations with the heathen neighbors upon the departure of Nehemiah for Persia. The first task was the cleansing of the chamber occupied by Tobiah, and the reorganization of the separatist policy.

In the second place, he reemphasizes the necessity of the giving of the <u>whole</u> tithe which has been

1 -- Oesterley, p. 137.

neglected[1]. Again he zealously urges Sabbath Observance[2] and, finally, he talks a bit on mixed marriages[3]. It is interesting to note, however, that Nehemiah does not insist on divorce of Jews from their foreign wives, but orders against future repetition of the act on the part of the younger generations.

With this four-fold task accomplished, we lose sight of the layman with suddenness which is startling. We cannot even conjecture what happened to him, how long he stayed in Judah, whether he went back to Persia or any other such idea. We just lose him, as far as this generation is concerned.

"Our study of the character of the Judean community has demonstrated conclusively that the chief impetus to reform must have come from without,"[4] says Kent. Thus, "When Nehemiah had completed his many-sided work, the Judean community was, for the first time in its history ready to give heed to the law book which Ezra and the consecrated Jews of the dispersion brought in their hands."[5]

1 -- Nehemiah 13:10-14.
2 -- Nehemiah 13:15-22.
3 -- Nehemiah 13:23-27.
4 -- Kent, History of the Jewish People, p. 193.
5 -- Ibid, p. 194.

Comparatively few facts are at hand from the close of the era of Nehemiah until the coming of Ezra in 397. Neither sacred or secular historians have given us a great deal of information concerning this important period. However, this is not strange in either case. One could not well expect secular historians to spend much time discussing such a small province of so great an empire. Neither could one expect so proud a people as the Jews to record in detail the happenings in so dark a period of their history.

We will note but three points in closing an historical survey. We know that Eliashib, the high priest, at the time of Nehemiah, was opposed to the reforms he instituted. Thus, we can well suppose that the reforms of Nehemiah did not last long after he left the stage. We also know that Jehohanan became high priest in Jerusalem in 411[1]. He was in that office when Ezra arrived, and the conditions were bad enough then. Thus we assume the Church helped little in the readjustment of Israel. We also know that Bogoas was governor of Judah about 407 since some of the appeals of the Egyptian Jews were addressed to him[2].

1 -- Leslie, p. 112.
2 -- A further discussion follows -- see Elephantine Papyri.

Thus closes the history of the fifth century. Much has happened in the few years of which we have record. One wonders what took place from 500-460 and from 430-400. Just yet we do not know.

III. Jewish Literature created in the Period.

A. Literature from Palestine.

1. Historic Literature.

It will not pay us to stay long in this section of the literature created within Palestine of a historical nature for we have already considered quite at length the problem of Ezra and Nehemiah. We have seen[1] what sections of Nehemiah and Ezra are historical originals and what added parts might well be edited originals. The rest we will have to question, if not discard, as historical material. In accepting this material here we might add the conclusions of Creelman[2] which agree insofar as the original personal memoirs are concerned. He further suggests that the rest is the work of the Chronicler and may be either based on history or oral tradition. Unless parts of Chronicles[3] were written at this time, which is doubtful, these are only two historical works of the period.

2. Prophetic Literature.

a. Malachi.

We have already discussed this Prophet and set

1 -- Section II, division A - 2.
2 -- I. O. T., p. 201.
3 -- i.e. II Chronicles 36:22-23 etc.

his date at 460, classifying him as the first prophet of the fifth century. We also considered him, briefly, as his writing touched on the history of the period.

Malachi, or better, "The Messenger", was not what we would call one of the greater of the prophets. We read enough in his short message to assure us that he held many of the conventional opinions of his time. He is a ritualist from start to finish. He advocates divine hatred of Edom as do the Jews of his day. Yet he tells the story of a universal God[1].

Perhaps there is a reason for this practical idealism. It may be possible that there is a good psychology in this new interpretation of the religious need of the hour. He saw, as others must have seen, that all the pre-exilic prophecy had really failed to bring the goal toward which they battled with all their powers of persuasion. The people had refused to respond to the appeals to a better life. Perhaps, then, the unknown prophet was wise in quietly teaching a few ideas instead of radically consigning everything to Sheol.

He opens by stating the love of Yahwah for Israel. The people are not so sure for they cannot see the action

1 -- Malachi 1:11.

of that love. In proof, Malachi offers the destruction of Edom, the arch-enemy of the Jews[1]. But what did Israel do in return? They answered with ingratitude, especially the priests[2], who acted as if God were not there. They even allow impure sacrifice to be offered, and then expect to see love of God. That won't do. You must either give God the best or get out. Then he opens with a universal statement which brands him truly a prophet as he says that even the Gentiles offer better sacrifices to Yahweh than the Jews. In so doing, he recognizes all heathen worship as praise to one God - Yahweh.

He goes on to discuss what will happen to these religious leaders[3]. Their blessings shall be turned to curses. Then in contrast he lists the characteristics of the ideal priest. In so doing, he hopes to show the people the true faults of their leaders.

Malachi now turns to the laymen, for they, too, have a responsibility to Yahweh. He feels that they can hardly expect to see the love of God when they have wives who worship heathen gods[4]. He even goes so far as to prophesy that these men shall lose not only their God

1 -- Malachi 1:2-5.
2 -- Malachi 1:6-14.
3 -- Malachi 2:1-9.
4 -- Malachi 2:10-16.

but also their civil and religious rights[1]. The sin was not only in the marrying, but the divorcing of their Hebrew wives who had lived with them so long. "The life of the two is one and dies if sundered by divorce."[2]

He moves then to a criticism of the popular cynicism and doubt[3]. The people don't believe there is a God of justice — well, says Malachi, he'll come soon enough, much to your chagrin. He suggests folk may not fear their God now, but they will when the doom strikes them.

His second popular criticism in this section lies in the people's failure to pay their tithes. They have never changed — they have always robbed God — and then they have the audacity to expect God to love them. If they would only repent and pay their tithes, Jehovah would send the rain again, and they would be so prosperous all nations would envy them[4].

He comforts those who are losing hope because the wicked seem to be the only prosperous ones in the nation. He assures them that God knows, and their names are recorded with their deeds. The judgment day will right all these wrongs[5].

1 -- Verse 12.
2 -- McFadyen, J.E., in Abingdon Commentary, p. 835.
3 -- Malachi 2:17 - 3;5.
4 -- Malachi 3:6-12.
5 -- Malachi 3:13 - 4:3.

He closes with an appeal to follow the law of Moses or expect destruction[1]. This is the only[2] reference to Moses' law in the Prophets.

b. Obadiah.

The author supposes that the reader wonders why this prophet is not listed, discussed, or even mentioned in the history of the fifth century as here written. It is because he is not satisfied with the historicity of the character. There are "thirteen[3] persons bearing the name Obadiah, mentioned in the Old Testament, but we cannot identify the author of this book with any of them." These few verses have been, says Bennett[4], subject to much controversy. It would seem that there are two points in the twenty-seven verses of the document which cause the most trouble. The most direct historical reference, says Creelman[5], comes where the author speaks of the treacherous conduct of Edom when some foreign power conquered Jerusalem. They apparently not only enjoyed the idea, but even took part in the plunder and hindered the fugitives in their escape[6]. There are four occasions that could be so

1 -- Malachi 4:4-6.
2 -- Bennett, W.H., The Rel. of the Post-Exilic Prophets, p. 88 - 102.
3 -- Watson, W.G., Obadiah, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 784.
4 -- Bennett, W.H., The Rel. of P. E. P., p. 86, 87.
5 -- I. O. T., p. 212.
6 -- Obadiah 13 & 14.

referred to, but scholars almost unanimously agree that the event spoken of is the sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar[1] in 586. By a bare process of elimination this would put the prophecy as exilic or post-exilic. But the other problem rises in the discovery that verse 1b to 5 is almost the same as parts of Jeremiah 49:7-22. The question raised here is whether Obadiah quoted from Jeremiah, Jeremiah quoted from Obadiah, or whether they both had access to the same source. Who can answer? In II Chronicles 28:17 and II Kings 16:6 we hear of an attack on Judah. Perhaps that is the date of the prophecy from which they both might have quoted. I would not advance it as a theory, though, because it is a guess at most.

Some scholars feel that the section from 5-7 implies that Edom is finding her just reward for this treacherous attitude toward Judah in the trouble she is having with a former ally. Creelman[2] suggests that this belief would raise strong grounds to date this prophecy during the exile.

There is one more instance of question. The latter part of the book is apocalyptic, and its point of

1 -- Spelled Nebuchadrezzar by some modern scholars. We have used the "n" as found in the older translations of the canon.
2 -- P. 212.

referred to, but scholars almost unanimously agree that the event spoken of is the sacking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586. By a bare process of elimination this would cut the prophecy as exilic or post-exilic. But the other problem rises in the discovery that verse 10 is almost the same as parts of Jeremiah 49:7-22. The question raised here is whether Obadiah quoted from Jeremiah, Jeremiah quoted from Obadiah, or whether they both had access to the same source. Who can answer? In II Chronicles 28:17 and II Kings 16:6 we hear of an attack on Judah. Perhaps that is the date of the prophecy from which they both might have quoted. I would not advance it as a theory, though, because it is a guess at most.

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1 -- Initial "Nebuchadrezzar" is from Moore's scholars. We have been "an" a force in the entire transmission of the text.

2 -- P. 229.

view seems to imply a date rather late in the post-exilic era[1].

So, though this short book is concerned almost entirely with Edom, its disposition is a problem. It might be either three separate prophecies put together by later editors or one prophecy written at a post-exilic date.

There is an assistance to a study in the critical scholarship which considers Jeremiah 49 an editorial addition which would put it much later than 604 B. C. Thus it could be easily copied from Obadiah. Again, some authors feel that Joel copied from Obadiah, thus putting the prophecy we are discussing before the beginning of the fourth century. Another fairly recent development is the noting of the similarity between Malachi and Obadiah.

It is almost impossible to gain a concensus of opinion among the authorities in the field despite the comments just made. Each author has his own interpretation of the data that is common property. However, if we leave the question of whether 10-14 was written at the time of the event, or was retold for a long time before it was finally written, as a problem we cannot solve, we can

1 -- Watson, Abingdon Commentary, p. 784.

well date the rest at about 460 or, at least, between 460 and 400 B. C.

Since we assert that Obadiah is a product of the Fifth Century, we shall study the teaching for a few moments.

Upon first reading, one feels that here is an outburst of hate and not a religious document at all. Vengeance is not an uncommon desire of ancient minds, but it was hardly the only idea of a prophet, even when prophecy was in its decline. G. A. Smith[1] gives us a very fine discussion of Israel's attitude. It is the same, he says, as the situation between Jacob and Esau: on the one hand high ideals and on the other immediate interests; on the one hand a religious nation of the highest sort, while on the other a typically irreligious nation.

"Obadiah's eyes were too full to see, his heart toobitter to feel, that the heathen must be included in God's purposes of mercy; but he did believe, that, in spite of all appearances, God is sovereign and ultimately the kingdom must be the Lord's."[2] Here is the first step toward Jesus' famous words "Father forgive them". It falls far short, it is true, but the step is taken. But

1 -- The Book of the Twelve, Expositor's Bible, Vol. I.
2 -- Watson, Ibid, p. 785.

just what does the book hold? There are three divisions as we have noticed above.

The condemnation of Edom[1] is backed up with knowledge of their coming trouble which is either common knowledge or a prophecy based on appearances. They fall thus because of their hostility to Jerusalem[2] when it was destroyed. Thus Edom gets just what she gave. This calls out a prophecy of inverted order. The day of Zion[3] shall come, when Israel shall reign supreme, and Jehovah shall rule.

c. Trito-Isaiah[4].

The first step in the division of the book of Isaiah caused a break at the end of chapter 39. At the beginning of chapter 40, we are in a new world and we see the work of a new author. This is almost generally accepted and almost as universally dated during the exile as we have seen and discussed in the introduction of this paper.

The next step is one in which the authorities disagree. It was first considered that the same author wrote the whole of 40-56, adding 56-66 after the exile.

1 -- Obadiah 1-9.
2 -- Obadiah 10-14.
3 -- Obadiah 15-21.
4 -- Chapters 56-60.

Koenig[1] and others still hold to this theory. Again Bennett[2] suggests that it might be that these passages are pre-exilic in origin, probably copied or quoted by Second Isaiah.

This hardly seems sufficient. As one reads into chapter 56, there "comes the impression of a great break in circumstance, tone, and color. The break with the high tone of chapter 55 is sudden and unmistakable."[3]

The change does not, in itself, prove that more than one author wrote. Professor Wildman[4] made the statement concerning Ezekiel in a rhetorical question thus: "Couldn't a man have more than one idea." A number of scholars feel that way about Isaiah and credit the original prophet with this section[5].

Driver[6] sees a division point between 39 and 40 with the rest of the book "the Great Prophecy of Israel's Restoration." He supports this thesis[7] with an appeal, first, to internal evidence, and then to language and style, and last to the theology and thought. His whole

1 -- p. 325.
2 -- Biblical Introduction, p. 194; cf. Bennett, W.H., The Rel. of the Post-Exilic Prophets, p. 103 ff.
3 -- Rogers, R.W., Isaiah, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 668.
4 -- B. U. S. T., 1933.
5 -- cf. Bleek, Fr., Introduction to the O. T.
6 -- Isaiah, Life & Times, ch. III, & Driver, S. R., Introduction to the Literature of the O. T., p. 230 ff.
7 -- Isaiah, Life & Times, p. 185.

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thesis is found in "these chapters form a continuous prophecy dealing throughout with the common theme" quoted above[1]. He divides the prophecy into three parts.

The first includes 40-49 and the prophet is interested in showing the certainty of the coming release. Israel will be released to teach the world true religion.

The second division includes 49-59, and he exhorts folk to be ready for this new task. And in the third[2], he pictures the ideal Zion. It seems unnecessary to consider this idea or the group of scholars who follow Driver farther, for the reason that they accept the thought without argument. They assert and do not supply proof. I certainly would not minimize the work they have done in making the first division, but they did not go far enough, it would seem.

Modern scholarship has massed evidence to suggest a post-exilic date for what Duhm called "Trito-Isaiah." From references to the Temple[3], one would believe that this prophecy was written after 516 B. C.; then there is more reference to such religious institutions as

1 -- Introduction to Lit. of the O. T., p. 230.
2 -- Chapters 60-66.
3 -- Isaiah 56:7; 60:7; 62:9; and 65:11; 66:6.

sacrifice[1], the priesthood[2], the Sabbath[3], etc., than we find in Second Isaiah. One might go on quoting passages which would illustrate the point, for there are many passages which fairly shout their origin as post-exilic.

That we may move forward to other fields let us suggest that most, if not all, of this section was created sometime after the return from Exile. The temple has been built, and services have been held long enough to have practices creep in which were not generally accepted, and thus caused minor discussion. If we study the intricate details of the Hebrew used[4], we will pass the period of Haggai and Zechariah and find the place for our prophet about the middle of the fifth century.

The prophecy opens rather weakly with a discussion of the ennuchs and the strangers, or proselytes. The first group have no future for they have no families, Isaiah would build a monument for them if they kept the law and the Sabbath. The second group of outcasts are those strangers who are living in Jerusalem[5]. They need not worry, for Jehovah shall not forget them, provided they follow the Jewish law and custom.

1 -- Isaiah 56:7; 60:7; 62:9; 66:20.
2 -- Isaiah 66:21 and 61:7.
3 -- Isaiah 56:2,6,; 58:13f; 66:23.
4 -- Rogers, R.W., Ibid, p. 668.
5 -- Isaiah 1:6-8.

From here he launches into a furious attack on the leaders of Jerusalem and all Israel[1]. The nation is full of idolatry, and the leaders are blind to it. Not only that, but also their very incompetence and ignorance leaves the nation defenseless. Having satisfied his anger he moves on to the idolatrous party itself[2]. He seems to know exactly to whom he is talking, but we do not know just who comprised this group unless it was those Jews and Samaritans who remained in Palestine after 586. But there is hope for all those who love the Lord and forsake their idols[3].

In chapters 58 and 59, he deals with methods. The first necessity is the cutting out of mere mechanical fasts. It is far better to abstain from oppressing the weak, and care for the unfortunate[4]. Again, he appeals to keep the Sabbath[5].

Sin is a barrier between God and man[6], but God is willing to destroy that barrier[7]. When he does, Jerusalem will be the seat of future glory where all the

1 -- Isaiah 56:9-2:2.
2 -- Isaiah 57:3-13a.
3 -- Isaiah 57:13b-21.
4 -- Isaiah 58:1-12.
5 -- Isaiah 58:13-14.
6 -- Isaiah 59:1-8.
7 -- Isaiah 59:9-21.

From here he launches into a furious attack on the leaders of Jerusalem and all Israel[1]. The nation is full of idolatry, and the leaders are blind to it. Not only that, but also their very incompetence and ignorance leaving the nation defenceless. Having metaphorically[2] made answer he moves on to the idolatrous party itself. He seems to know exactly to whom he is talking, but we do not know just who comprised this group unless it was those Jews and Samaritans who remained in Palestine after 586. But there is hope for all[3] those who love the Lord and forsake their idols.

In chapters 58 and 59, he deals with morality. The first necessity is the cutting out of mere mechanical fasts. It is far better to abstain from oppressing the poor[4], and care for the unfortunate. Again, he appeals to keep the Sabbath[5].

Sin is a barrier between God and man[6], but God is willing to destroy that barrier[7]. When he does, Jerusalem will be the seat of future glory where all the

1 — Isaiah 59:1-2.
2 — Isaiah 59:3-15a.
3 — Isaiah 59:15b-20.
4 — Isaiah 58:1-12.
5 — Isaiah 58:13-14.
6 — Isaiah 59:1-2.
7 — Isaiah 59:20-21.

nations will march to Zion[1]. Then in the last three chapters, he rises to new heights and lights the light of a true philosophy of religion.[2]

d. Isaiah 34 and 35.

Here is another passage which seems foreign to the writings of Isaiah. Not only is the change apparent in the thought construction of the document, but even in the language used and the attitude toward history. Here are the words of an unknown prophet most assuredly written after the Exile in 586; perhaps even after the return in 537.

The author gives us some clues to the date. In the first place, he expresses severe hostility toward Edom, which must be pointing to a date as late as the Exile. From the destruction of Jerusalem in 586, Israel never forgave Edom.

Again, the promise and picture of the restoration of the exiles[3] dates it, at least, after the exile began.

There is a similarity of writing and expression between these two chapters and the works of Deutero and Trito Isaiah and others. One would surmise that the

1 -- Chapters 59-64.
2 -- Chapters 64-66.
3 -- Chapter 34.

interpretation given here would place the work in the period of the exile. However, the last statement of comparison of ideas refutes that suggestion, despite the fact that the author forecasts the return of the exiled peoples.

Scholars[1] agree, in part, at least, to place this work in the last half of the fifth century, perhaps near the middle (450).

Thus we close the prophetic resume of the fifth century, leaving Joel as the beginning of the fourth and out of our jurisdiction.

3. Cultic, Devotional, and Poetic Literature.

The Psalms are themselves a sufficient field for study in such a thesis as this. It is impossible to broaden our discussion here to consider all the aspects of this type of literature. There is little doubt that prophecy had the most to do with the life of Israel, but, after the exile and the rebuilding of the Temple, we have every reason to believe that hymn-singing took a close second place. On the one hand, if prophecy represents the voice of God to man, songs are the response of man to God[1].

1 -- Sanday, "Bible" in Encyclopedia of Rel. & Ethics, p. 567.

interpretations given here would place the work in the period of the exile. However, the last statement of comparison of ideas refutes that supposition, despite the fact that the author foresees the return of the exiled people.

Scholars agree, in part, at least, to place this work in the last half of the fifth century, perhaps near the middle (450).

Thus we close the probable course of the fifth century, leaving Joel as the beginning of the fourth and out of our jurisdiction.

3. Subject, Doctrinal, and Poetic Features.

The Psalms are themselves a sufficient field for study in such a thesis as this. It is impossible to broaden our discussion here to consider all the aspects of this type of literature. There is little doubt that prophecy had the most to do with the life of Israel, but, after the exile and the rebuilding of the Temple, we have every reason to believe that hymn-singing took a close second place. On the one hand, it was deep emotions the voice of God to man, songs are the response of man to God.[1]

1 - Bowlby, "Psalms" in Encyclopedia of Bibl. Literature, p.

"It is generally allowed among Old Testament Scholars that the Psalter was the hymn book of the post-exilic Jewish community. As such, it properly belongs to that period."[1] Thus, since it is a practically endless task, if not an impossible one, to date each individual psalm and construct its author, we shall consider the many documents as the Hymn Book of the new Temple.

This book of songs contains "the religion of Israel at its greatest depth and its most passionate intensity."[2] It is generally agreed that songs were an early heritage of the human race. Barton[3] tells us that "poetry and music began before Adam died." Eiselen[4] suggests that "Hebrew poetry reaches back to the most ancient recollections of the people of Israel", and Kent[5] adds that this was also true of other nations of antiquity. Israel had prophets, and the influence on her life is a matter of history. She also had those who put the prophetic insight into song. "The Psalter, representing as it does close to a thousand years of Israel's history, may be viewed as a transcript of the heart life of the Hebrew people.

1 -- Creelman, p. 68.
2 -- Leslie, E.A., Abingdon Commentary, p. 509.
3 -- Barton, W.E., The Psalms and Their Story, Vol. I, p.9.
4 -- Eiselen, F.C., The Psalms and Other Sacred Writings, p. 11.
5 -- Kent, C.F., The Songs, Hymns and Prayers of the Old Testament, p. 3.

Coming from a vast variety of individuals.....it is a mirror of the life of the soul, not of Israel, merely, but of humanity. It is the noblest book of devotion known to men."[1]

To attempt to take these songs from the whole lyric literature of the Jews will spoil the trend of development. But, even that will not suffice. We must consider them in only two ways, in this thesis: as a hymn book of the second Temple; and, in detail, those psalms which are the products of the fifth century.

The same difficulty arises, at once, that we discovered in the dating of Ezra, and that we shall again disdover in the dating of the final compilation of the law. Certainly the organization into a definite form did not come before the return from the exile. Sanday insists that ....."In reference to the date... ..the consensus of opinion among Old Testament scholars today is that" no grouping of the psalms "is earlier than the Restoration, i.e. the Persian Period."[2]

We can readily assume that such a statement as Sanday's does not tell the whole story. There was a temple, and there was temple worship before the exile. We know[3]

1 -- Leslie, E.A., from Abingdon Commentary, p. 509.
2 -- Creelman, p. 228.
3 -- See Creelman, I. O. T., for further details.

that there were songs written before the exile, and we can well surmise that the editors of the final hymn book for use in the second Temple made use of previous collections. Dr. Leslie[1] gives us eight constructive steps in the development of the psalter. We quote:

> 1. The compilation of a Davidic collection with a doxology at the close, 3-41.
>
> 2. The compilation of a second Davidic collection with a doxology at the close, 51-72.
>
> 3. The compilation of a collection entitled "of Asapha", probably a guild of Temple singers,[2] 50, 73-83.
>
> 4. The compilation of a collection entitled "of the Sons of Korah", perhaps used in the temple of Dan, 42-49.
>
> 5. The redaction of an Elohistic Psalter, 42-83, out of psalms that were derived from the second, third, and fourth collections.
>
> 6. The Elohistic Psalter was enlarged by the addition of 84-89.
>
> 7. The compilation of a collection entitled "Song of the Ascents", 120-134.
>
> 8. The compilation of 90-150 around these "Songs of the Ascents" and other similar collections.

When we have this information as a background, and when we realize how many of the songs are pre-exilic and individual in origin, we can return to the statement of

1 -- "Introduction to the Psalms" in Abingdon Commentary, p. 510.

2 -- Bethel is suggested by J. P. Peters as the Temple in which they were used.

Sanday, quoted above. To that we shall add Dr. Leslie: "In every case in their present arrangement, they have been collected and edited for the post-exilic period."[1]

Barton[2] suggests that the first collection of Davidic psalms was made in the reign of Hezekiah. He bases his evidence on the statement in II Chronicles 29:30, "Moreover, Hezekiah, the king, and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praises unto Jehovah, with the words of David and of Asaph, the seer". This, Barton says, "probably records the first crude beginnings of the Hebrew hymn book."

The second collection he places in the reign of Josiah and includes in these two collections most of which we have listed above in four.

The rest he places at the time of the second Temple which would place the final construction of an inclusive hymn book within our century.

W. R. Smith[3] places 1-41 at the time of Ezra - Nehemiah, 51-72 during the fourth century, the Korahite (42-49) and the Asaphic (50, 73-83) collections between 430 and 330 B. C., the Elohistic redaction during the third

1 -- "Introduction to the Psalms", Abingdon Commentary, p. 513.
2 -- Barton, Wm.E., The Psalm and Their Story, Vol. II, p. 191ff.
3 -- "Psalms" in the Encyclopedia Britanica, 9th Edition & The Old Testament and the Jewish Church, chapter VII.

century, and puts the rest at a still later date.

C. A. Briggs[1] suggests a collection of "Miktamin", or golden poems, before the time of Nehemiah. This would include Psalms 56-60 where "Miktam" is found. Later in the Persian period he states the formation of another collection entitled "Maskilin" including Psalms 42-45 and 52-55 where "Maskil" is used. From these two a prayer book was compiled from the two groups just named with the Psalms of the Sons of Korah compiled before the beginning of the Greek period.

Kirkpatrick[2] lists Psalms 1-41 at the time of Solomon with the exception of 1 and 2 which are an editorial introduction and 33 which is an editorial explanation of the last verse of 32. Psalms 42 to 89 were compiled in the middle period of the Kingdom with the exception of the appendix, 84-89, which were created or edited after the Return. The rest of the psalms were collected at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, with the possibility of much later addition to them.

Thus it can be clearly seen that there can be no definite conclusion reached. We do not know just what the hymn book of the second Temple contained. Despite the

1 -- Commentary on the Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. IX ff.
2 -- Kirkpatrick, A.F., The Psalms, in the Cambridge Bible, Books 2 & 3, p. XLIII ff.

century, and date the text at a still later date.

C. A. Briggs[1] suggests a collection of "Wisdom", or golden poems, before the time of Nehemiah. This would include Psalms 36-60 where "Wisdom" is found. Later in the Persian period he states the formation of another collection entitled "Hallelu" including Psalms 42-43 and 52-55 where "Hallel" is used. From these two a prayer book was compiled from the two groups just named with the Psalms of the Sons of Korah compiled before the beginning of the Greek period.

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1 -- Briggs, C. A. Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. XX ff.
2 -- Kirkpatrick, A.F. The Psalms, in the Cambridge Bible, Cambridge, p. p. XXIII ff.

difference of opinion, here presented, it is generally agreed that the compilation took place for use in the second Temple. General agreement can likewise be found for the use of Psalms 3-89, at least, as temple worship songs of the fifth century.

And now we come to one of the most difficult discussions of this paper: What Psalms were written in the fifth century B. C.? If there is some difference of opinion upon the date of the various collections, one, at least, could find agreement in a general way. Here, however, no two authors come within reach of each other. For example, C. A. Briggs[1]: "In the early Persian period there was a great outburst of psalmody. As many as thirty-three psalms were composed: 4, 6, 9-10, 11, 12, 14 (=53), 16, 17, 22, 25, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 57a, 59, 64, 69a, 70 (=40b), 75, 76, 78, 80, 83, 101, 109a, 140, 143, 144a. This was due to several influences. The conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, which aroused the enthusiasm of the exilic Isaiah, called forth lyric songs. The rebuilding of the altar and the temple, with the restoration of the worship in Jerusalem, as it was accompanied by prophetic voices, so also by those of lyric poets. The struggles of the pious with the unfaithful in the community, and with

1 -- The Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. LXXXIX.

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1 -- The Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. LXXXII.

the neighboring little nations, whose jealousy and hatred constantly interfered with the growth and prosperity of the people of Jerusalem, also naturally exposed itself in song."

"Toward the close of this period the collection of Miktamin, or golden poems, was made after the example of the older collection of the book of Yashai.

"No further additions were made to the Psalter till the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, when it was enriched by a large number of songs written during and after the exile. To this period are due, in the main, the fourth and fifth books."[1] [2]

To the middle Persian period, the times of Nehemiah, we may assign sixteen psalms: 5, 6, 15, 26, 29, 30, 40a, 47, 51, 57b, 65, 66a, 69b, 138, 139a, 141."[3]

Turning next to Eiselen we find him assuming that there are two distinct classes of Psalms[4]. There are many which show no historical situation which could give them a specific date. These, therefore, cannot be assigned to any period, surely not the fifth century. Among these Eiselen places Psalms 8, 19:1-6, 29, 33, 36, 65, 66, 76, 92, 103,

1 -- Leslie, Abingdom Commentary, p. 509 --- IV = 90-106; V = 107-150.
2 -- Perowne, J.J.S., Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. 63.
3 -- Briggs, C.A., The Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. LXXXIX.
4 -- Eiselen, p. 72 ff.

104, 107, 145-147. He also suggests the possibilities of 24:7-10, 47, 67, 93, 96-100, 111, 113, 115, 117, 118, 134-136, 148-150. These are all Hymns of praise or liturgy. In this class he also places the "experience" psalms: 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 23, 26, 27, 42, 43, 52, 53, 58, 62, 63, 64, 75, 82, 84, 91, 101, 121, 127, 128, 130, 131, 133, 138, 139 and 19:7-14 and 119. To this he adds the "reflection" psalms of 1, 34, 37, 90, 112; 49 and 73; and concludes with 15, 24:1-6, 32, and 50.

If this were the only method of dating the separate documents, this classification would be permissible and we could deal with the remainder. There are, however, other methods[1]. Diction and literary style, the relation to writings of known date, and the character of the religious ideals expressed, all do their part in this gigantic task.

Following these four tests and the work of Daniel G. Stevens[2] we would assign psalms 120-134, inclusive, to the age of the return. This author offered his proof and had it accepted as a doctor's dissertation. But still we are not satisfied. Is there no agreement to be found? Creelman who usually aids us materially refuses, utterly, to commit himself. On page 131 of his Introduction he says,

1 -- Leslie, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 513
2 -- Stevens, D.G., A Critical Commentary on the Songs of the Return, p. 68ff.

"on account of this wide range of opinion on this subject no attempt is made in this volumne to determine what psalms are with certainty, more or less, to be assigned to this period."[1] Later he adds, "no attempt is made in this volumne to note the times and occasions which different representative scholars have considered probable for the various psalms in the several collections." Again on page 228 he assures us that "in this connection it is the date of the collections, not so much of the individual psalms composing them, which is being considered. It would seem to me that the only answer we can make on the psalms of this period is "I do not know". Certainly the future scholars will have to do much work before the problem will be solved.

In the Psalms we see not only a hymn book for Temple worship, but even more a book of life of a people. "The Hebrews, with their burning religious passion, their spirited nationalism, their strong imagination, were poetically gifted to a high degree."[2] Here we see the childlike expressions of faith of a God-fearing people. Unlike the poetry of many of their contemporaries, theirs was simple and direct, yet plumbing the very depths of life.

1 -- P. 266.
2 -- Leslie, E.A., "Introduction to the Psalms", in Abingdon Commentary, p. 513.

They express different religious ideas which Gunkel[1] groups under ten headings:

1. Hymns of Praise.
2. Hymns of Jehovah's accession to the throne.
3. National Lamentations.
4. The King's Psalms.
5. Individual Lamentations.
6. Individual Songs of Thanksgiving.
7. Lyrics such as blessings, cursings, victory songs and the like.
8. Prophetic poems.
9. Wisdom poetry.
10. Antiphonal poems and liturgy.

Unlike the prophets, there is little theory found in these pages. It is everyday experience with the world in which they live and the other world in which God lives that stirs the psalmist to sing of the majesty of his Creator as he sees the deeds He has done in the history of His people. Every picture which is painted across the vision of the writer contains the image of his God.

It is not all one conception that we find here. Rather it is the soul of a people laid bare. Not written in one era, it traces the development of religious

1 -- See Class Notes, p. 22.

consciousness of individuals and the race. We find trust in God, gratitude toward God, appeals to God to cleanse His people, fellowship with God, exaltation and despair, all mirrored on the pages of the hymn book. The story it tells teems with life as folks lived it then, and from its teachings comes the inspiration of the future.

4. Wisdom Literature.

Of the three documents which we classify as wisdom literature, one lies in the realm of our consideration. From the first chapter and other references[1], one would surmise that the stage for the play in the book of Job is set in the Patriarchal period of Jewish history. The general opinion, however, is that the book was not written then, but much later[2]. We shall note here three of these arguments. In the first place, the book has all the marks of an advanced state of society, where "a wider range of observation" is noted then would be possible for a nomad of the old days[3]. In the second place, there is too much reference here and there to a general condition of distress than could be projected from merely a personal sufferer[4]. And

1 -- Job 42, 7 ff.
2 -- See Creelman, p. 235.
3 -- cf. 12:13ff; 24; 30:1-8; 29:7; 31:21; 31:11; 28, 35f.
4 -- cf. 13:18ff; 7:1; 9:24; 12:6,17; 24:12. / & 13:18ff.

consciousness of individuals and the race. The final trust in God, gratitude toward God, appeals to God to cleanse His people, fellowship with God, exaltation and despair, all mirrored on the pages of the hymn book. The story it tells teems with life as folks lived it then, and from its teachings comes the inspiration of the future.

4. Which Is Wrong.

Of the three documents which are classify as wisdom literature, one lies in the realm of our consideration. From the first chapter and other references, one would surmise that the stage for the play in the book of Job is set in the Patriarchal period of Jewish history. The general opinion, however, is that the book was not written then, but much later. Six sub-notes here three of these arguments. In the first place, the book has all the marks of an advanced state of society, where "a wider range of observation" is noted than could be possible for a nomad of the old days. In the second place, there is too much reference here and there to a general condition of distress that could be projected from merely a personal sufferer. Are

1 — [illegible]
2 — [illegible]
3 — [illegible]
4 — [illegible]

again, the very attacking of the problem of suffering calls for an age of deep reflection. Such subjects were not problems to be solved in the early days. In Jeremiah[1], in about the year 626 ff., is the first reference we have to the questioning spirit. There are many other references we might command, but this suffices.

If we accept this later date possibility, we still have some problems to solve. Some folk place the work in the time of the exile[2], for there they see a nation in the same condition as the character Job. They also claim that there are parallels in language between Job and Deutero-Isaiah, suggesting that they "lived surrounded by the same atmosphere of thoughts."[3]

Another group favor a post-exilic date. They propose for our consideration that Job represents a righteous nation, and such a consciousness did not develop until the reforms of Nehemiah in 432, etc. Then there are other authors who find hints of an even later date[4].

Professor Lofthouse[5] suggests, in a unique way, the service that Job gives to the world. He says it is

1 -- Jeremiah 12:1.
2 -- Davidson, Job, p. IXVIX.
3 -- same reference.
4 -- Creelman, p. 239, 350 B.C.
5 -- Job, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 483.

hardly even wisdom literature. In fact, he assures us that the author must have been one of the cynics of the Old Testament who deliberately cut himself from traditional theology and traditions. He says the book is poetry. Its main concern is the relation of God to suffering and evil. He then raises four rather pertinent questions. He first suggests that there is a possibility that Job is a compilation. It would seem that each part of the book has its contribution to make to the whole, but there have been many suggestions and arguments to the contrary. The prologue and epilogue have been doubted, Elihu is quite commonly considered an addition, the speeches of Yahweh have been attacked, and several shorter passages, scattered here and there. We shall consider them under four main headings.

1. The Prologue and Epilogue, it is said, resemble an old folk-tale. Some scholars consider that here we find the whole or a large part of a Volksbuch which the author of the Bible document used as a foundation for his religious dissertation. In support of this stand there are four arguments offered:[1]

a. The prologue and epilogue are written in prose while the rest of the story is composed in poetry.

1 -- Eiselen, Ibid, p. 139 f.

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a. The prologue and epilogue are written in prose while the rest of the story is composed in poetry.

1 - Kik-Jan, 1941.

b. Here the divine name is Yahweh, while, in the rest of the book we find El, or Eloch, or Shaddai[1].

c. Here Job is "patient, submissive, and resigned", while the Job of the poetical sections is "impatient, bitter, and even defiant".[2]

d. The prologue shows us Job on trial, the epilogue testifies to the fact that he has stood the test to God's satisfaction. Then the scene changes, and the dialogues seem to have God on trial, rather than Job.

This is, in part, the theory of Budde. He goes further into the study of dates for his Volksbuch, but we need not follow his reasoning and the rebuttal, for it is of no consequence to this paper. We are interested, however, in authorship. Budde builds an interesting, but not altogether convincing case for a separate author. In the first place, it is not altogether a certainty that the poet of the body of Job could not or would not have used prose if he saw fit. Sometimes, modern critics do not give the early writers the right to change their methods, even in the light of the fact that it is being done everywhere today. In the second place, the argument is a good deal stronger. Here I should like very much to be able to study the original

1 -- There are two exceptions, 12:9 and 38:1, which are considered as later interpolations.
2 -- Eiselen, Ibid, p. 139 f.

language. Without that knowledge, one must move cautiously. Yet, the mere fact that there are three words used for God in the poetry sections, would not make it altogether fanciful to suggest that the author used Yahweh in the prologue and epilogue for a purpose, or at least for a change. In this paper I have used some seven or more terms for God. Why should we limit the author of Job to one or two? There are, in the third place, many times in a man's life when his moods change. Again, my only answer to the change of attitude is that it may have been possible that the mere statement of the case we find in the prologue is the introduction to the discourses which follow. Then the author gets down to details, with the epilogue as a conclusion. This argument is not strong, but is supported by the first few verses of the epilogue, if they are not interpolations. I feel that these came from the same author but from an earlier date.

2. The speeches of Elihu are the center of another critical battle. Driver[1] tells us that "the general opinion of commentators and critics" places them at a later date than the rest of Job. They use three main arguments:

a. Elihu is not mentioned in the prologue nor the epilogue. In the former case the silence may be explained

1 -- Introduction to Lit. of the O. T., p. 428.

by the fact that he is not a principal speaker. It is harder to explain the absence of the name in the epilogue where God is passing judgment on Job's friends.

b. The speeches of Elihu are loosely knit to the story; they interrupt the thread of the story just at the point where we expect God to answer Job; they anticipate a part of the arguments of God[1].

c. "The speeches of Elihu do not contribute anything essentially new to the argument."[2] His great emphasis is upon Job's suffering as a punishment for sin, which has already been made by Eliphaz[3] and refuted by Job[4].

d. In addition, it becomes apparent as one reads the story as a whole that the speeches of Elihu lack the literary characteristics of those of the friends of Job[5].

It is clear that no absolute proof can be offered, but the arguments in opposition to the authenticity of these speeches are strong. They appear to have been added by some later author who was dissatisfied with Job's attitude, with the ineffectiveness of the speeches of the friends, and with the place given to disciplinary suffering[6]. Here we shall take our stand.

1 -- See chapters 36 and 37.
2 -- Eiselen, Ibid, p. 144.
3 -- 5:8 ff and 17 ff.
4 -- 6:24 ff.
5 -- Driver, Ibid, p. 429.
6 -- cf. Eiselen, Ibid, p. 145 ff.

3. In the speeches of Yahweh, also, we find various scholastic theories. Their wrath unites in opposition to the description of Behemoth and Leviathan[1]. The arguments are not convincing, though one must admit that Yahweh's speeches would increase in dignity and power if these passages were omitted. If such were done, says Eiselen[2], "the second speech of Yahweh would lose its significance as an independent speech, which may suggest that originally there was only one utterance of Yahweh."

Others, however, favor more radical measures. Some even go so far as to deny the Yahweh passages a place in the original document. Their reason lies in the fact that Yahweh offers no solution to Job's problem except in suggesting it is a mystery to be treated in reverence by man[3]. Their first argument lies in Yahweh's changed attitude toward Job from the Prologue to his speeches in the poetry section. That can be explained both by the acceptance of an earlier date for the prologue and the epilogue as we have already suggested, and also as a direct response to the impatience of Job. Further, if we accept the theory of one speech by Yahweh, we may be able to assign 42:3 to a later author and lose our problem at that point. We can

1 -- Job 40:15 - 41:34.
2 -- Ibid, p. 147.
3 -- Cheyne, T.K., Job and Solomon, p. 69.

3. In the speeches of Yahweh, also, we find various scholastic theories. Their great bulkes in opposition to the description of Behemoth and Leviathan.

The arguments are not convincing, though one must admit that Yahweh's speeches would increase in dignity and power if these passages were omitted. If such were done, says Gieselen, [2] "the second speech of Yahweh would lose its significance as an independent speech, which may suggest that originally there was only one utterance of Yahweh."

Others, however, favor more radical measures. Some even go so far as to deny the Yahweh passages a place in the original document. Their reason lies in the fact that Yahweh offers no solution to Job's problem around in suggesting it is a mystery to be treated in reference by man. [3] Their first argument lies in Yahweh's changed attitude toward Job from the prologue to his speeches in the poetry section. That can be explained both by the acceptance of an earlier date for the prologue and the epilogue as we have already advocated, and also as a direct response to the importance of Job. Further, if we accept the theory of one speech by Yahweh, we may be able to assign 42:3 to a later author and lose our problem at that point. We can

1 — Job 40:32 - 41:34.
2 — Gieselen, op. cit., p. 27.
3 — Job 38 - 41.

well assume that the original book of Job contained at least one speech of Yahweh.

4. One more problem remains. It deals with that passage which has been called "The Soliloquy of Wisdom". If we are to accept the chapters 38 ff. as Yahweh's words and give them a place in the original book, the problem of chapter 28 becomes more acute. If such a submissive frame of mind had been Job's after his discussion with his friends, why need Yahweh appear at all? The chapters immediately following[1] go back to the complaining attitude again. Budde suggests that the passage does not reflect resignation, but despair rather. This removes our difficulty but is not supported by the text. A more logical suggestion would be to feel that it is an inserted, priceless bit of wisdom literature. It might even find a place in the book of Job after 42:6 but we have no logical reason for placing it there[2].

No one can fail to see that we are dealing with one of the world's greatest poems. It is the longest narrative poem in the Hebrew canon and it deals with the most insoluble problem of religious or secular history. It is full of "terse phrases, illuminating metaphors and

1 -- (29 - 31)
2 -- Eiselen, Ibid, p. 149-150.

similes, and brilliant descriptions."[1] In addition we find in chapter 31 "the fullest exposition of Hebrew moral ideals that we possess."[2]

We find three characteristics of life which are not only illuminating to us, but prove their practicality when placed in the light of modern experience. In the first place, suffering, which is a universal experience, is related to God. In the second place, Job's insistence on facing the worst, even if it should necessitate criticizing God, is not only a good example of courage but also the only road over which one may travel to intellectual achievements. Thirdly, one is impressed by Job's faith. He holds his beliefs against nature and humanity alike. He is sure that justice and goodness shall rule at last.

The book is divided as follows:[3]

1. The Prologue -- chapters 1 & 2 -- in prose.

2. The Colloquies -- chapters 3 - 31 -- Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophan -- in poetry.

3. The discourses of Elihu -- chapters 32 - 37 -- in poetry except 32:1-6, the introduction.

4. Jehovah's reply to Job -- 38:1 - 42:6 -- poetry.

5. The Epilogue -- recounting Job's subsequent fortunes -- in prose -- 42:7-17.

1 & 2 -- Lofthouse, W.F., "Job", in Abingdon Commentary, p. 488 and 489 -- cf. also Job 4:12-24; 5:18-27; 6:15-20; 16:11-14; 24:5-11 and 38:31-35.
3 -- Driver, Literature of the O. T., p. 409.

5. Legal Literature.

To complete the Pentateuch, it but remains to consider "P". or the Priestly Code. Its history is a long one, and the battle that has raged over its date has been a hot one. Driver[1] says that there are still those who would date it in its entirety during the 9th or 8th century B. C. This theory probably is based on the systematic methods and chronological tables produced by the writer or writers of "P". We have discovered, from time to time, errors in this chronology, thus the "a priori" argument will not hold. Our answer is that the dates could well be added at any time. Driver then goes into some detail[2] in comparing the "P" document to other parts of the Hexateuch and other sections of the Old Testament and coming to the conclusion that "P" dates from the Babylonian Exile. He says so, because the pre-exilic period shows no indications of such a legal code. When "P" and "D" are compared, "P" is undoubtedly the older. Further "P", "at least, in some of its elements", appears to be later than Ezekiel[3]. Thus, he says, "they (the compilers of "P") belong to the exilic or early post-exilic period."[4]

1 -- L. O. T., p. 133
2 -- L. O. T., p. 136 ff.
3 -- L. O. T., p. 139.
4 -- Ibid, p. 142.

Most authorities agree, and Creelman goes on to mention the fact that the first appearance of this code, as far as Jerusalem is concerned, dates with Ezra. Thus the compilation must have gone on throughout the century we are studying. We can date it generally from 500-400 B.C.

Its compilation can be so dated, but the various parts of the completed Pentateuch have earlier roots. Even before there was written law, there was oral tradition within the family, tribe, and clan. With this tradition there probably arose sagas and fables of the earlier days centered around the great characters of pre-Mosaic times. With the occupation of Palestine, and the worship of a new God, changes took place in custom and tradition which gradually led to a higher religious and social life. Each sanctuary, in all probability, had its lists of rules. Out of these grew longer lists of laws of which the Book of the Covenant[1] is the earliest[2].

During the period of the United Kingdom, and later after its division, we find increasing traces of literary compilations. Two of these, in the form of history, have been preserved and greatly affected the growth of the Pentateuch. These are commonly known as "J" and "E", the former

1 -- Ex. 20:22 - 23:33.
2 -- Jordan, W.G.,"The Legal and Historical Literature of the Old Testament", in Abingdon Commentary, p. 146.

a product of Judah and the latter of Israel[1]. Probably at the time of Manasseh, or during some other period of reaction, when it became necessary to impress upon the people the lessons here taught, the two documents were combined.

At approximately the same date "D" was produced. Here is a combination of the priestly and the prophetic. All of the moral fervor of the eighth-century prophets is found in the writing of this author or these authors.

During the reign of Josiah, the document "D" was accepted as the law of the land. Soon the desire to combine it with "J" and "E" became apparent. This desire was increased as national life came to an end and the few documents became more prized. Thus, in 560[2], the three were compiled into one.

As if in reply to the prophetic compilation of "J", "E", and "D", came the Holiness Code from the priestly circles[3]. Here they put into form a short group of laws with a priestly interpolation.

Down in the exile, Ezekiel added his thoughts to the fast growing group of documents in legal history[4]. Then came the fifth century and with it the foundation of "P" and the completion of the Pentateuch.

1 -- Eiselen, F.C.,"The Pentateuch", in Abingdon Commentary, / p. 143.
2 -- Leslie, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 111.
3 -- Lev. 17-26; see Eiselen, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 143.
4 -- Ezekiel 40 to 48.

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Down in the exile, Israel added his own in to the last growing group of documents in Jewish history[4]. Then came the fifth century and with it the formation of "P" and the completion of the Pentateuch.

1 -- [illegible]

2 -- [illegible]

3 -- [illegible]

4 -- [illegible]

The Pentateuch was apparently a product of the exile. Tradition tells us that Ezra brought it with him in a completed form. Thus it must have been in the process of composition during the hundred years we are studying. "Thus, aside from minor alterations made at a still later time, the Pentateuch reached its completed form by the end of the fifth century. The finished work was called Torah or Law."[1]

One is impressed by the two-fold conception of the legalists. Truly, the Pentateuch is the Law book of the Hebrew peoples. But it is more than that. It is the Law book of God. The opening words are "In the beginning God", and that idea permeates the whole collection. It is the pivot point around which the Torah is built. Thus we can honestly say that the final compilation of the Law was the high point of the fifth century before Christ. It was one of the permanent contributions to history and religion. One after another of the events of the history is here portrayed, and their general acceptance testifies to their authenticity. The teachings remain unchanged whether they came from Moses or are a collection of ideas and ideals from the developing life of a people. The authorship problem does not affect the fact that the Hebrews were the first to

1 -- Eiselen, in Abingdon Commentary, p. 144.

learn and teach that righteousness is the ultimate goal of life.

Thus, we close the century at 401 B. C., leaving Joel and Ruth and further comment upon Ezra to another. In leaving, we will glance a moment at the secular and uncanonical literature of the fifth century.

B. Uncanonical and Secular Literature Created in the Fifth Century.

We are now approaching a very interesting section of this paper. There is at least one creation from other sources than those we have examined.

1. The Elephantine Papyri[1].

This Elephantine is an island in the Nile in Upper Egypt which lies opposite Assouan. We owe a good deal of our knowledge of the Jews who settled here to Rubensohn and Zucker of Berlin during 1907 and1908. The most important outcome of these excavations was the finding of a large number of documents written on papyrus in Aramaic which was supposedly the production of a Jewish military colony. We do not know just how they got there, though there are several possibilities. They might have been some of the original group who left Jerusalem after the murder

1 -- Oesterley-Robinson, p. 159 ff.

of Gedaliah and who sought military service to support themselves, after the conquest of Egypt by Persia. This belief is supported by Sachau's papyri of 408 when he states that the colony was at Elephantine and the temple built before the arrival of Cambyses in 525 B. C.

A later document, "The Letter of Aristeas", which can be dated sometime in the first century B. C.[1], suggests that many Jews entered Egypt with the Persians and that others had been sent out as hired soldiers to fight with Psammetichus against the Ethopians. It is but a step from this suggestion to the thought that some of these folks remained as a Persian garrison in Elephantine. Both of these possibilities could be accepted as solutions without too much conflict. It this latter view is held, the original group might have been augmented by those mentioned in Jeremiah 43 and 44. Indeed, it may be that the reason this group left Jerusalem was to find a congenial welcome from those already there.

But there still remains a very difficult problem for our consideration. If these Jews came directly to Elephantine from Palestine, why are the papyri of the fifth century written in Aramaic? Surely that language was not yet in vogue in Israel for Ezra and Nehemiah were

1 -- Oesterley-Robinson, Ibid, p. 159 ff.

written mainly in Hebrew. There are two possible solutions — either that they changed to Aramaic after they arrived in Egypt to keep up with the changing styles of the day, or else that they didn't come from Palestine at all. If not, where did they come from? Well, they might have been some of those first exiles who went to Assyria after the fall of Samaria and who left Assyria for Elephantine, with a knowledge of Aramaic, in the armies of Assyria. This is only conjecture, of course, but we know that Ashur-bani-pal entered Egypt and conquered it in 667 and following. Oesterley suggests[1] if this theory last named is accepted, it explains much in connection with this colony.

In the first place, it explains many language difficulties, names of Assyrian and Babylonian origin which appear in the papyri, and also the fact that they call themselves so often Aramaeans and so seldom Jews.

It might also explain why the Temple was not destroyed as the others were when Cambyses arrived in 525. It might explain, too, why these people wrote to both the governor of Judah and of Samaria when they wanted to rebuild their Temple. Further, it might throw some light on their religious customs.

This explanation is not universally accepted.

1 -- P. 162.

Crowley[1] raises two objections which are valid — that the Persians would hardly have trusted the folk in an Assyrian garrison and also that the folk themselves never mention Israel. Yet, this seems the only logical answer yet proposed.

Sixty-two[2] whole documents and some fragments have so far been found, all belonging to the fifth century B. C. They were all written by Jews, some of whom we find mentioned in the Old Testament[3]. Most of these documents are concerned with business transactions such as loan transactions, property transfers, etc.

One of the most interesting of these has been mentioned elsewhere in this paper. It is addressed to Bagoas of Judah, asking his permission to replace the temple that had been destroyed by Egyptian priests. It described the destruction as well[4]. The first document was ignored so they sent another which brought permission, not, probably, from the two governors addressed, but from Arsames through their intercession. This seems peculiar, inasmuch as the Deuteronomic law of 621, or shortly after,

1 -- Aramaic Papyri, p. 15, 16.
2 -- Oesterley, p. 163.
3 -- Hosea, Azariah, Zephaniah, Jonathan, Coniah, Zechariah, Nathan, Isaiah, etc.
4 -- Crowley, A., Jewish Documents of Time of Ezra, No. 27 p. 67.

centralized all worship at Jerusalem. Perhaps this shows to what depths the law had fallen by 400 B. C.

These people worshipped Yahweh, or Yahu as they called him, but they also had other Gods and had developed a sacrificial system and a priesthood. They kept the passover and other Jewish feasts, and the women worshipped with them.

One of the outstanding values of these documents is their authenticity. They were written at the time when the event they describe took place, preserving the actual words and writing of the century we are studying. Here we have no problems of history, no added bits of editorial comment or false correction to fit the whim and fancy of the translator. "They are the earliest Jewish documents, except one or two inscriptions, outside of the Bible."[1]

The effect of these colonists on their homeland must have been great, for Professor Meyer begins his book on these papyri with this remark: "Judaism is a creation of the Persian Empire."[2]

These documents are interesting and enlightening.

1 -- Crowley, A., Jewish Documents of Time of Ezra, No. 27, p. X.

2 -- Meyer, E., The Papyrus of Elephantine.

IV. The Problems of the Period.

A. Political.

1. Government.

During the fifth century B. C. the land of Palestine remained under Persian rule. This massive oriental empire was divided into satrapies[1]. A governor was appointed for each satrapy and with him a military leader and a secretary. Each was a check against the other, and each owed his allegiance direct to the King. Damascus was the probable official capital of the Syrian satrapy. As the century opened we find Zerubbabel, a Jew, ruling as pekah in Jerusalem. Again in 444 or 445 Nehemiah assumed that position.

In neither case did the hopes of the prophets or people reach fruition. The Jews remained a captive people throughout the century. Further than that, Israel was surrounded by hostile or unfriendly nations. Zerubbabel had Darius' permission to build the wall, but the first attempt was frustrated by Tattenai and Shethar-bozenai in 515. The second attempt met with even worse results when, in 460 - 455, Rehum and Shimshai, with permission from Artaxerxes, raised troops from Samaria, Ammon, Moab, and elsewhere and

1 -- See page 21 ff. on this thesis.

attacked Jerusalem[1]. This hatred, coupled with the fact that many of the Jews were still in captivity, and augmented by the great distance that separated Palestine from the seat of the empire, made life one great political problem for which there was no solution.

Failing to achieve their freedom and a chance to rebuild their state, the Jews, in the fifth century turned to other sources. They developed a legal, moral, and religious code, and established Judaism. Thus the internal priesthood became the governing body with the political power, which they held, with more or less success, long after the time of Christ.

B. Economic Problems.

It is easy to trace the economic trend of Israel if we follow her political developments. A nomadic people live a primitive, pastoral life. They never quite forgot their earlier, easier life, and there was always someone who would suggest that this new civilization was bought at too high a price. Many there were who would have preferred to remain either making brick in Egypt or herding sheep on the desert.

For their agricultural life the Jews could not

1 -- Kennett, R.H., "Israel", in Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VII, p. 454.

attacked Jerusalem. This battle, coupled with the fact that many of the Jews were still in captivity, was aggravated by the great distance that separated Palestine from the seat of the empire, made life one great political problem for which there was no solution.

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For their agricultural life the Jews could not

1 — Fowler, J. H. Historical in Thought and Practice, Philadelphia, Pub. Soc., 1911, p.

have found a better home. One would find it difficult to discover a land of such small dimensions with such diversities of climate and soil. In Palestine the Jews could raise practically any crop they desired[1].

Yet in the fifth century we find a people who, for almost a century, have suffered for want of food and necessities of life in Palestine. Either the land was worn out by this time or else too much was required in taxes. The main economic problem was personal and national in the fifth century. Personal inasmuch as the battle was for existence, and national insofar as all residents of Israel were effected. Certainly there was little there to call back the exiles to their homeland.

During the time of Nehemiah, we have already seen, the rich and medium wealthy were forced to contribute of their income to take care of the poor.

C. Social Problems.

1. The Evolution and Development of Hebrew Social Life, Institutions, and Legislation.

"When one undertakes the study of Hebrew social institutions, he is concerned with a development that stretches over more than a thousand years."[2]

1 -- Soares, The Social Institutions and Ideals of the Bible, gives a complete discussion of this section, (p. 76-80)
2 -- Soares, Ibid, p. 19.

From the first history of the Hebrews that we have to the time of Ezra, shortly after the close of the fifth century, the social life of the Jews was undergoing a rapid change. That development did not stop with Ezra, of course, but that is as far as we are going. There are four great stages that we shall now consider before taking note of the specific problems.

Let us go back, first, to the social life of the scattered, loosely-knit tribes of primitive Israel. Nomadic life determined their social customs. The organization was patriarchal; their wealth was only that which could be carried or driven as they moved. They were fighters, and they had slaves to fight their battles and do their menial work. Though the Hebrews later idealized this period, it must be remembered that it was all primitive socially.

In the organized life to the exile there is seen a great advance in life. They learned the art of organized warfare and cumulative agriculture. They built cities, permanent houses, and walls. Social customs had to change. The patriarchal organization was modified by numbers. With the kings the development of social rules and laws increased. As we see them develop we marvel at their genius.

Again the exile changed the social life, modifying the future of Judaism quite materially. Most conquests and

the subsequent exile of the population puts an end to any social life at all. Not so Israel. The exiles absolutely refused to become Babylonian. They continually looked toward the future of their homeland. They learned much and eventually Babylon and Persia greatly effected the future of the Jews, but never did they win them completely. Their very insistence caused them to preserve custom and law for the future in literature, which is a great boon not only for history but also for sociology and religion. This is called "theoretical legislation"[1] for there was no immediate chance to use it, but it gathered authority as it went along.

The post-exilic and fifth century society was largely ecclesiastical as we have noted from time to time. It was impossible to have independent national existence. All of the legal and monarchic forms of life are impossible. Thus they developed religion as we shall see shortly.

This period had no great social prophet as did many of the centuries of the past, but it had a great lay leader in Nehemiah who met some social problems for Jerusalem[2].

1 -- Soares, p. 24.
2 -- See section of history on Nehemiah.

2. The Family — Marriage — Education.

First in importance up to this time was the father who began his rule in the days of the clan. The position of the wife was entirely subordinate. She was still purchased with money from her father in the time of the story of Ruth[1]. There was a general practice among the higher groups of polygamy. This Nehemiah had to face. He drew the suggestion that no new foreign marriages be made. Men could and did increasingly divorce their wives. This brings out the criticism of Malachi so it must have been an increasing problem. Not until the Roman days could a woman get a divorce. Infidelity brought death to a woman, but a man was practically free it he did not reach the realm of another man. Despite this, though, the position of a mother was high in this era of Judaism[2]. Bonds of love did unite the families of Israel as we can well see in the story of Ruth which must have had a basis in fact. Malachi[3] uses the family life to symbolize the relations of Jehovah with his people. Here, alone, was education carried on in Israel.

D. Religious Problems.

Religion in Israel began with the Taboo and

1 -- Ruth 4:10 (4th Century B.C.)
2 --Psalm 45:16 f. etc.
3 -- Malachi 2:10.

Holiness. This was not only Jewish but verily universal. There were food taboos, death taboos, disease taboos, such as leprosy, and the taboos around reproduction.

The second step was that of sacrifice and offerings. The first idea was the gift sacrifice and then came the meal sacrifice and the festival —— all of which were continued in the fifth century. In Nehemiah and Malachi we find an insistence on the return to the tithe and first-fruit gifts. The sabbath in the fifth century is apparently abused, though Nehemiah seems temporarily to have put the practice in its correct place[1].

Practically the only new custom of the exile and post-exile periods is found in the synagogue. Religion in the fifth century was a center of interest. Up to 460 the conditions were bad, then for a few years they improved only to lapse again until the time of Ezra.

1 -- Nehemiah 10:31; 13:15-22.

V. Summary.

The fifth century is a period of interest. It was truly a valuable period in Jewish history. That is surprising inasmuch as we have lost far more than half of what occurred during that short period. The heritage of the past marked Israel's development as we have seen and has necessitated a continued reference to the past in the writing of this paper. Her contributions to the future were many and one can only admire the rapidity with which this people recovered its balance after the exile, and the wealth of literature it produced for posterity.

Thus we have taken a rapid survey of a little group of folk, beaten and captivated, yet with a spirit that could not be killed, an ardor that would not cool.

In our century we find the work of some of the last of the prophets, a great lay leader, and the beginnings of Judaism under a great priest. The latter is not a direct product of this century, but it was during the latter years of our study that he prepared himself.

Ezra it was who, during the fifth century, gathered the Pentateuch together. This, in itself, would be a contribution worthy of any century, but it is not all. Within this span of years came a book of hymns for the second Temple, a bit of wisdom literature which grapples

V. Conclusion.

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Thus we have taken a rapid survey of a little group of toil, hesitant and cautious, yet with a spirit that could not be stifled, an order that could not cool.

In our century we find the work of some of the last of the crusade, a great lay leader, and the beginnings of Judaism under a great priest. The latter is not a direct product of this century, but it was during the latter years of our study that he presented himself.

Thus it was who, during the fifth century, gathered the Pentateuch together. This, in itself, would be a constructive work of any century, but it is not all. Within this span of years came a body of hymns for the second Temple, a bit of wisdom literature which provides

with the greatest of man's problems, suffering, and four bursts of prophecy.

It is not difficult for any age of prosperity to be happy. It is not wholly inexplainable for an age of depression and despair to become melancholy and degenerate. The Jews of the fifth century did not fit either classification. Their nation was gone, their people were scattered, and their crops were poor, but they kept on the upward trail. The captives learned the customs and industries of their captors. Those in Egypt gave the future the Papyri, those in Babylon gave posterity the Pentateuch and Judaism, and those at home built new walls, a new altar and the second Temple. They sang new songs and collected the old; they grappled with theology and saw a new God; they prophesied and not only made the future hopeful, but also the present practical. They met their own problems and gave to the future an inescapable heritage. The challenge of the fifth century lives on today.

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and numerous other sources which were consulted on points of issue. Some of these are found in the introduction and the footnotes of the body of the thesis, others are not even referred to.